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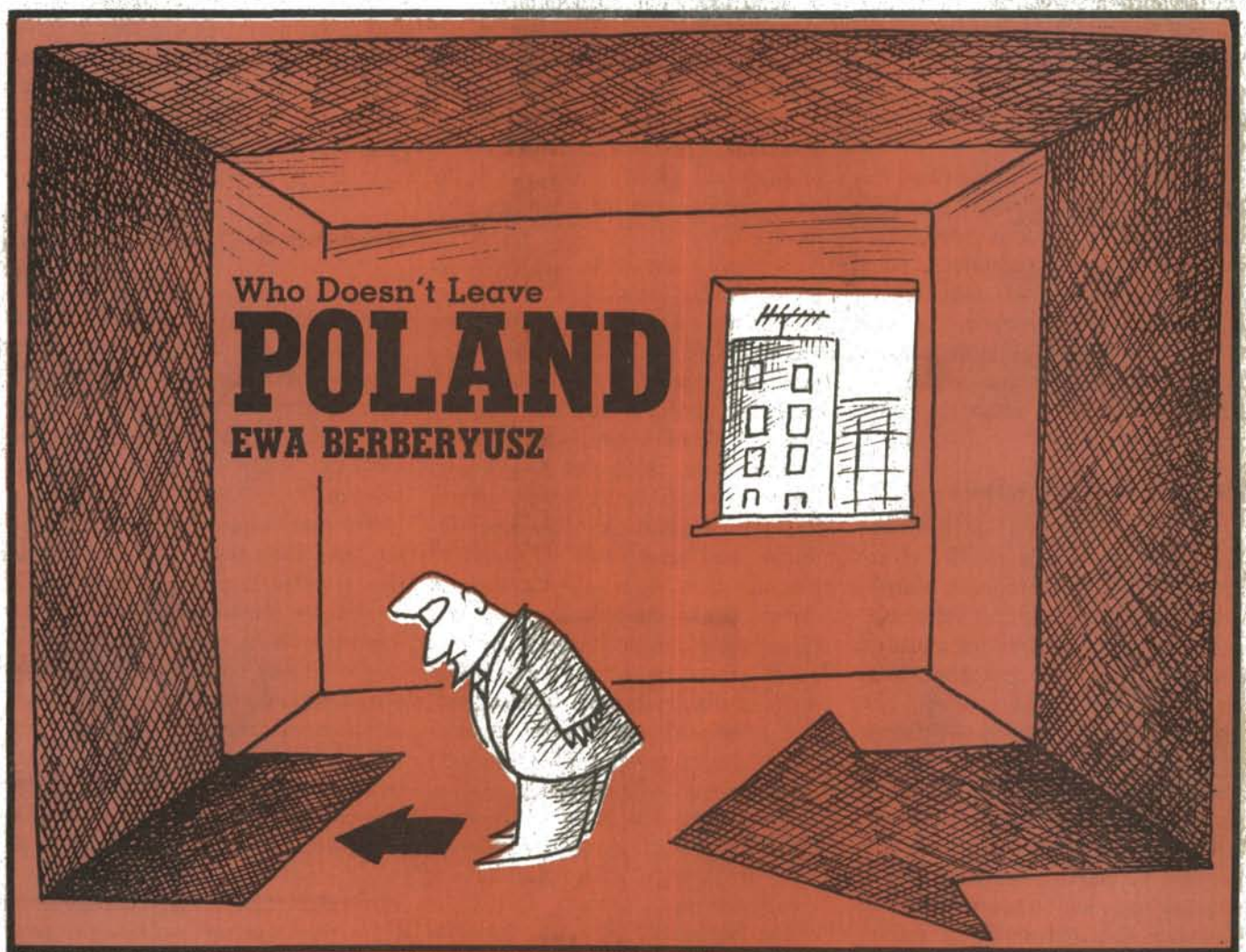

THE ECONOMIC PASTORAL
David Toolan • T.R. Martin
Gene R. Laczniak • Francis DeBernardo

THE MEANING OF AIDS
Dennis M. Doyle

J.V. LONG On The Tenants of Time

GORDON C. ZAHN on Waldheim

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CORRESPONDENCE

Blacks & Jews

Baltimore, Md.

To the Editors: As a practicing Jew who is working in ecumenical and black-Jewish relations, I was anxious to hear Julius Lester's talk to our shul on one Shabbat. In the civil rights movement under Dr. Martin Luther King it was the Jewish community who helped finance the movement.

The movie star Ossie Davis said that the black-Jewish coalition is gone. We cannot minimize our differences, but we must work together in coalition building for our common good. Julius Lester ["Pilgrims of the Absolute," by John Garvey, March 25] could be the leaven in the bread and make a considerable contribution.

MELVIN N. COHEN

Priests & their wives

Arnold, Mo.

To the Editors: Rev. Joseph H. Fichter's article "Rome Welcomes Married Priests" [March 25], mixes valuable reportage with misunderstandings. Though the Episcopal church's 1976 decision to ordain women may have been the occasion for some of these Episcopalian clergy (not all) to enter the Roman Catholic church, this was in no case the cause. Thousands of Episcopalians have left that church in protest against that decision yet have, even today, not the slightest intention of becoming Roman Catholics. That additional step requires, in every case, something more: what Fichter calls "the conviction that the fullness of Christianity lies in Rome." Mere dissatisfaction with another church never made anyone a Roman Catholic. Newman lost faith in Anglicanism several years before accepting the claims of Rome.

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

Equally unfortunate is the confusion between Catholic priests who resigned to marry and married convert clergymen. The demand that the former be readmitted to priestly ministry amounts to the demand that their abandonment of a solemn commitment, publicly made after years of preparation, should have no consequences. Convert clergymen made no such commitment. They married in good faith. Their acceptance as Catholic priests is the church's response to the sacrifices they and their families have made.

In many cases those sacrifices are heroic. Fichter's language ("sharply decreased income and lowered living conditions for the family during the year or more of preparation for ordination") masks the harsh realities. For many the period in limbo is two years or more. Overnight the clergyman passes from being a respected figure in the community with a comfortable home, good income, and near total security, to homelessness, unemployment, food stamps, utility cut-offs, even welfare. (There are documented cases to support every one of those statements.) How many of our seminarians would persevere to ordination if forced to undergo tests of that magnitude? And the convert clergy have not only themselves to think of but wives and children as well. Moreover, few if any will ever again enjoy the living standard they left for conscience sake.

The charge that these are "less than quality men" is sad indeed. Apart from their sacrifices, most of these men have educational attainments beyond those of all but a small minority of Catholic priests. Many have doctorates. For the Catholic church to refuse to these men the continuation of priestly ministry would be to give the lie to our statements at Vatican II, and since, that dogmatic agreement alone is necessary for reunion, and that all other matters are negotiable.

REV. JOHN JAY HUGHES

The author replies:

Father Hughes is well known for his precise writing, but in this instance he has slipped up twice: (1) Several convert clergymen told me that the ordination of women was the reason why they switched to Catholicism. (2) The distinction between these convert priests and the priests who resigned to marry is very clear in my article on p. 178.

JOSEPH H. FICHTER, S.J.

Students & Opus Dei

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Rev. Paul Dinter writes ["Catholics at Columbia," April 8] of what must have been a trying and soul-draining labor for the church in a difficult setting. But why the gratuitous slight of Opus Dei, fellow workers in the Lord's vineyard?

Not to pick a quarrel, but as director of the Opus Dei center near Columbia, I must object in the interest of fairness. Is it "repressive and moralistic" to confront students with the undiluted Gospel message of Christ? To invite them to repent and return to the sacraments? Christ was as uncompromising with sin as he was merciful with the sinner. This is not popular with students in any age—less so when it is caricatured and dismissed by a clergyman as a harmful "brand" of

(Continued on page 350)

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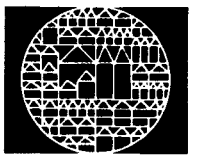

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Health-care justice

Former Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler was right about one thing, there really is a "health-care inflation monster" lurking out there. And try as we might, we have yet to constrain it. For nearly two decades, various "cost- containment measures" have been proposed and enacted, but health-care costs have continued to mount, outpacing inflation generally. Health insurance premiums have jumped sharply this year with increases ranging from 10 to 70 percent. Some experts are predicting even steeper rate rises in the near future.

Why have health-care costs risen so rapidly during a period of relatively stable inflation rates? There are several reasons.

For starters, the population is aging. There are more people over sixty-five; they live longer than previous generations; they need more medical care than other segments of the population.

Then there are new technologies, sometimes introduced as money-savers, but which end up increasing costs: diagnostic tests, such as CAT scans; expensive drugs; and procedures like kidney dialysis. As these become a routine part of the medical armamentarium, they add substantially to health-care costs.

Medicare reimbursement procedures have been another source of higher health-care costs. Until 1984, Medicare paid medical bills retroactively. Because this type of reimbursement paid bills in full, without ceilings, doctors and hospitals were given incentives to perform as many services as possible, charging as much as possible. Massive fraud and padded bills became widespread, hiking up the national health bill.

Home care and outpatient clinics were set up to compete with hospitals and thereby to lower costs. The strategy has boomeranged. As insurers and employers succeeded in encouraging people to go to the hospital less frequently for nonemergency care, the home-care and outpatient industries boomed, increasing prices in all of these areas, including those of the physician and hospital services with which they were supposed to compete.

Regardless of where people seek health care or who pays the bill, the costs of treating the nation as a whole are soaring. According to Robert H. Blank, associate director of biosocial research at Northern Illinois University, the 11 percent of the GNP now spent on health care (it was only 6 percent in 1965) will reach 15 percent by the year 2000.

Has anything been done to contain costs?

For the last fifteen years, a surge in prepaid plans or Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) led insurers and employers to expect that health-care costs would fall. HMOs stressed total health care. They had built-in incentives to keep patients healthy and using as few medical services as possible. HMOs earned a

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profit whenever prepaid fees exceeded the cost of their services. Because HMOs promised real competition in the health-care industry, it was reasonable to expect lower health-care costs along with substantial profits if large numbers of people would sign on. HMOs grew rapidly at first; some 30 million Americans are presently enrolled. But recent reports show that for varied reasons—including high advertising costs, overly ambitious expansion plans, increases in doctors' fees, mergers, and a recent period of unexpectedly sluggish growth—HMOs' costs, and then prices, escalated. A 20 percent increase is expected in 1988.

Hospitals, the single most expensive part of the nation's health-care system, are paying a price for the success of home care and outpatient care. Many of these services are still less expensive than hospital care. However, as hospital admissions, length of stays, and occupancy rates decreased, hospital prices skyrocketed, in part to make up for revenue lost through vacant beds. And fees for outpatient treatment have risen as well, often for the same reasons that hospitals inflate costs—performing unnecessary procedures—and because outpatient care is not yet subject to strict government and insurer controls. Home care, for conditions that once required hospitalization, often depends on new technological devices—chemotherapy, intravenous medicine-dispensing pumps, telemonitoring, even home dialysis. These sometimes require trained nurses, making home care no less expensive for some patients than hospital care. Home care may be preferable for other reasons; even so, prices are rising here too. Many employers and health-policy experts believe that, from the viewpoint of society as a whole, home-health care will not prove cost-effective. That remains to be seen.

Then there are regional variations in the services and charges of hospitals: hospitals in many urban areas are dangerously overcrowded, while many rural hospitals have high vacancy rates. Soon, hundreds of these revenue-short rural hospitals will be financially unable to operate; then patients may have to travel to the nearest city to receive care, increasing health risks when time is a factor and increasing the burden on urban facilities.

Corporations and unions—which pay for the bulk of the nation's health insurance as part of employee/member fringe benefits—have been particularly creative in trying to cut their costs: hiring their own teams of physicians; exerting pressure on local hospitals and negotiating directly with surgeons for reduced fees; uncovering fraud in billing; and requiring second opinions before surgery. Several have significantly reduced their employee health-care costs.

Consider the Chrysler Corporation, which, in the early eighties, hired Joseph Califano—Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare under President Carter—to lead a health-cost-cutting committee. By scrutinizing employee medical bills, offering monetary incentives for using Chrysler-selected physicians, and encouraging sound preventive health measures, Chrysler saved millions of dollars over several years. Still, Chrysler's 1984 employee health-care costs exceeded $500 per car, and the figure continues to rise.

Corporations and unions, despite significant savings on the health-care costs of their own employees, have failed to contain the nation's ballooning health-care bills.

In 1984, Medicare implemented a new "prospective payment" system, reimbursing health-care providers with fixed fees, based upon the diagnosed illness. This system was designed to give hospitals incentives to control costs, incentives lacking in the previous "retroactive reimbursement" payment system. There appear to be drawbacks to this new system—there is evidence that some hospitals skimp on care and resort to premature discharge of patients when their costs come close to, equal, or exceed the new fixed fees—but it has shown signs of cutting costs.

Because of these Medicare reforms, restricted tax deductions for medical expenses, and higher Medicare premiums, the federal government is paying proportionately less of the nation's health-care bill than in the recent past. This leaves states and employers and employees to carry more of the load.

Despite cost-containment efforts, health-care costs continue to balloon; contained in one place, they bulge in another. The nation has placed its hopes in efficiency measures, new technological breakthroughs, and a heaping dose of "it will work out." It hasn't.

On top of all of this, the system is riddled with inconsistencies and injustices, which are hidden from many of us by a silent de facto rationing system.

In *Rationing Health Care in America* (Notre Dame, 1987), Larry R. Churchill provides a striking example of our current rationing system: "We spent $250,000 to keep Barney Clark

"I find the high price of medicine is the only thing that keeps me healthy."

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alive, tethered to an air pump, for 112 days of 'encumbered twilight'.... [At the other extreme] Eugene Barnes, a thirty-two-year-old, unemployed, stab-wound victim, died in a San Francisco hospital in February, 1985. He was turned away from four other hospitals because he lacked health insurance."

There are 35 to 40 million Americans who, like Eugene Barnes, are not covered by any form of health insurance. In the world of de facto rationing, many of these persons when in need of medical care are "dumped" by private hospitals, and sent on to public facilities.

Lack of health insurance is not the only form of de facto rationing. Hospital administrators in deciding what kinds of care their hospital will offer may choose to add a wing for intensive care, while limiting the hours of a more widely used emergency room. Some states will allow Medicare coverage of organ transplants, while other states refuse. Hospital pharmacists may decide to stock very expensive, but rarely used, drugs thereby limiting monies available for more standard pharmaceuticals. Every day, decisions to admit and discharge patients are made, depending upon whether or not they are insured and the extent of their coverage.

More than 30 percent of Medicare's money goes to patients in the last year of life (of whom many, though not all, are elderly). How much of this care is life-saving, and how much is an uncalled-for effort to prolong the lives of dying people?

Compare monies spent for neonatal care with prenatal care, keeping in mind that medical attention during pregnancy could prevent much of the need for neonatal care in the first place. Children's Defense Fund figures show that for every dollar spent on prenatal care, three dollars are saved on neonatal care.

Since we cannot afford to give everyone the maximum care possible, even if we were to spend 25 percent of the GNP on health care; and since we have not squarely faced the problem of limits in health care, we are left with a system that is unjust and ultimately impossible to contain.

The very notion of principled rationing, and the setting of limits, meets with objections. Every suggested limit is resisted by some special interest group. The recent decision to suspend funding for artificial heart research—because the money spent did not show enough benefit for society as a whole—has met with the opposition of such influential surgeons as Dr. William C. DeVries. Recent suggestions that life-extending procedures—not primary care—be limited for people over 85 have met with charges of Nazism and euthanasia. Public discussion is easily dominated by influential individuals and single-issue groups, especially those that are particularly powerful or can pull on people's heartstrings.

Certainly a just health-care system requires more than considerations of cost. Policy questions about distribution, access, and equity, along with more diffuse but crucial questions of community responsibility for the sick, compassion for the suffering, and care of the dying are primary to any national discussion. But until the whole health-care cost discussion can be freed from special-interest pleading, inflammatory rhetoric, and destructive political lobbying, we will succeed neither in creating a just system nor in containing health-care costs.

REPORT FROM EL SALVADOR

HUSHING UP WITNESSES

INTIMIDATION AGAINST THE CHURCH

Since the outbreak of civil war in El Salvador, religious workers and leaders have been particular targets of political violence. In the early 1980s they were murdered in large numbers. The 1980 assassinations of Archbishop Oscar Romero and four North American churchwomen were only the most notorious cases. A less brutal, but nonetheless frightening, campaign is under way again in 1988, apparently aimed at discouraging religious and humanitarian missions in El Salvador. Much of this has to do with the role these workers play as witnesses.

Over the years, scores of foreigners—many of them religious workers—visited or lived in El Salvador's zones of conflict, bearing witness to the manner in which the military conducts its operations there. Their testimony has had a considerable impact on the debate over U.S. policy toward El Salvador. Now the Salvadoran military is giving notice that it wants this practice stopped.

On January 8, 1988, Colonel Juan Orlando Zepeda, chief of the investigative unit of the Armed Forces high command, wrote to the highest officials of the Catholic and Lutheran churches in El Salvador, asking that they "impede" the visits of foreign religious workers to the nation's conflictive zones. The letter to Reverend Medardo Gómez Soto, bishop of the Lutheran church, and Monsignor Arturo Rivera Damas, archbishop of the Roman Catholic church, said such visits endanger the foreign workers and interfere with military operations. Besides, he added, foreign religious workers may "associate with terrorist delinquents of the FMLN which use the civilian populations as a cover and as a source of logistical supply or recruitment."

Since the letter was delivered, dozens of foreign religious workers, health personnel, and reporters have been detained, threatened, or harassed by the members of the military or death squads. These incidents range from the mundane—such as bureaucratic obstacles preventing visa renewals or safe-conduct passes for travel in contested zones—to the more ominous, including death threats and, in one case, a beating. Many have involved soldiers of the First Infantry Brigade, a tough outfit which Catholic church leaders have blamed for attacking the archdiocese's center for the displaced at San Jose Calle Real and for murdering three peasants from San Jose Guayabal, Cuscatlan early this year.

Aside from a general desire to keep foreign eyes off its operations, a second suspected reason behind the new campaign is military displeasure with the movement of peasants back to rural areas which had been emptied out by years of

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counterinsurgency efforts. Several towns destroyed by the military have been repopulated in the last two years, and in October 1987, more than 4,300 refugees returned from Honduras to live in the contested zones they had been forced to flee in the early 1980s. Having gone to a great deal of trouble to "drain the sea" of a population it did not trust, the military does not welcome the peasants' return. Many of the foreign religious workers who have been detained or harassed have been assisting in this repopulation effort.

On February 22, troops of the Belloso Battalion detained three development workers with the Mennonite Central Committee who were visiting friends in Piedra Labrada, on the slopes of the Guazapa volcano. The soldiers claimed the three—Gary Guthrie and Kori and Larry Leaman-Miller—did not have permission from the military to be in the area, although the Mennonites had been working there since 1981 and had never before been told they needed special permission. The soldiers searched and questioned them for hours about their work and religion and then turned them over to the National Guard, where they spent the night under an armed guard. The next morning the workers were forced into a pickup truck with civilian license plates by five men in civilian clothing with M16s. A fourth church worker, Nancy Guthrie, accompanied the three in the hope of protecting them. A few blocks from the barracks of the First Infantry Brigade, the four were blindfolded. Once at the barracks, Nancy Guthrie was questioned separately by Major Bill Chadwick, a U.S. military adviser. Then all four were lectured by a Salvadoran military officer about "bad North Americans" who go home and tell "lies" to their senators and representatives about El Salvador. U.S. military adviser Chadwick and U.S. Vice-Consul Mark Schall listened in on the lecture.

The experiences of Lutheran workers at the church-supported resettlement at Panchimilama have been particularly alarming. Four have been detained and threatened in recent months, several of them on more than one occasion. On April 30, two foreign Lutheran church workers leaving Panchimilama were forced off their bus by a military commander who threatened repeatedly to kill them, saying a friend of his wanted to see foreign blood. "Did you know what pain was before you came to El Salvador?" the officer asked, gesturing as if to cut off their ears and pull out their fingernails. After about half an hour of threatening statements, the commander finally agreed to examine the church workers' safe-conduct passes from the Armed Forces Chief of Staff, and let them board another bus.

These incidents are harsh reminders of the distrust and even hostility members of the Salvadoran military bear toward the churches and their humanitarian work. But if some foreign workers are feeling vulnerable now, they are still considerably less threatened than their Salvadoran colleagues. One foreigner remarked after being released that Salvadoran friends of hers had been held in the same barracks just months before. But without "the protection of foreigners' passports," they were treated less gently than their foreign friends. After being tortured and left for days without food and clothing, they were released without charges.

ANNE MANUEL

Anne Manuel, a previous contributor to Commonweal *on Central American issues, is reports editor for Americas Watch in Washington, D.C.*

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

IMPOSSIBLE, TWENTY YEARS AGO

'PARTNERS IN THE MYSTERY OF REDEMPTION'

What interests me about the draft letter on women's concerns is, first of all, the learning process it reflects and, secondly, whether the effect of this learning process can be extended to the body of bishops as a whole—and then to American Catholics in general. The draft, almost six years in the writing, was begun after a letter on women was proposed to the bishops' meeting by Bishop Michael McAuliffe in November, 1982. During the intervening years—perhaps because of the outrage expressed by women's groups that an all-male body should, in the quite literal sense, plan to pontificate on the life of women—the letter became a *response* to the concerns of women in church and society. That in itself is evidence of goodwill and openness to learning on the part of the drafting committee.

The reaction to this draft so far has been quite predictable. Feminists and a substantial number of press commentators have rejected it out of hand because it repeats the official church teaching on the ordination of women. The draft, however, acknowledges that for some women the whole issue of women's rights in the church revolves around ordination; the draft proposes restudy of the question and urges that a full study of ordaining women as deacons "be undertaken and brought to completion soon."

Feminist Sister Mavi Coakley, assistant director of the Center for Educational Design and Communication in Washington, D.C., where the bishops' committee often met, was at first opposed to the group's meeting there at all. "I was against their writing the letter in the first place and I haven't really changed my mind," she said, "but, watching them at work, seeing the problems they had with their fellow bishops, I realized what a struggle they faced. And I saw that they were really listening to the women there and making enormous efforts to be open to the various women's groups." Ruth Fitzpatrick, coordinator

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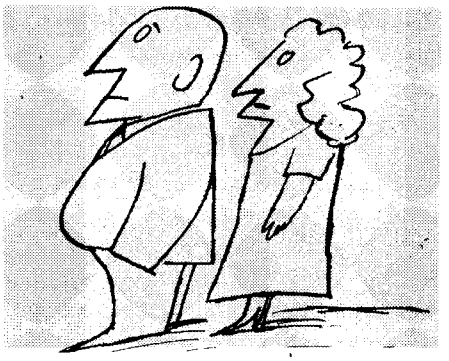
of the Women's Ordination Conference, in a strong statement faulting the bishops for calling for compassion rather than justice, concedes that from her point of view they were "boxed in from the beginning" by official church teaching.

Spokeswomen for the conservative women's groups, judging by their statements so far, are unwilling to give the bishops even that much understanding. Because the draft calls sexism a sin against human dignity and states that it "depersonalizes" women, the ever coolly intemperate Phyllis Schlafly, head of the Eagle Forum, accuses the bishops of "trying to create a new sin, hitherto unknown to the Ten Commandments, the laws of the church, the seven capital sins, and the sacrament of confession." Women for Faith and Family called the draft flawed in its methodology and said that it "ignores the real dangers of feminist excesses and the link between feminism and abortion." There are undoubtedly a number of bishops who feel the same way.

The very suggestion that the diaconate might be open to women is viewed by some clergy and laity as getting the camel's nose under the tent. A letter from a priest to the Catholic newspaper in the diocese from which I write is full of warning. "Any minimalization of the diaconate as outside holy orders to protect a male priesthood or to placate women would rightly infuriate permanent deacons, patronize feminists, and be at variance with certain church teachings," he wrote. We can be sure that many such letters arguing that what applies to the priesthood applies to the diaconate as well are being written and called to the attention of the bishops. The drafting committee will have its work cut out for it at the general meeting of the NCCB this month, when it presents its work for discussion and approval.

Will the draft create further division and disunity within the church as some of the conservative women warn? It depends on how the bishops reach their own consensus and how they use their teaching office after that.

The bishops' committee held consultations involving over 75,000 women. Mary Knutson Brabeck, professor of educational psychology at Boston College, who was one of the seven women assisting the committee, describes the thousands of women who took part in the learning process in a way that gives one hope: "It was exciting for me to see so many committed and intelligent Catholic women and the extraordinary energy they are bringing into the church. They vary in their points of view and their feelings—some are angry with the church; some see it as the source of comfort and security and want no change; others are not angry but are impatient at the rate of change—but they are all committed." This energy and commitment are a potential gift to the church which all the bishops may come to see and acknowledge.



There is evidence, too, that a growing consciousness of the concerns and problems of women is more widespread among the bishops than one might think. The pastoral on the economy took note of the injustices to women in the marketplace and confirmed that the poorest of the poor were women. The report of the papal commission on religious life, issued last year, noted that there is a spreading concern over the limited possibility of women having any part in the policy and decision making that affects their lives in the church—and that, consequently, many find paths of service other than the religious life. To those in the forefront of the drive for justice and equality, these perceptions may seem long overdue and far from what they hope for. Yet can we imagine any bishops giving voice to them even twenty years ago? Sometimes we need to look back and take stock. The draft will be rewritten after further discussion and consultation. It is possible that the final version may be uniting, specific in pastoral solutions of women's concerns, and shot through with a vision of woman in her uniqueness. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

FLOATING IN MID-AIR

ARE ALL OPINIONS CREATED EQUAL?

My daughter, who is ten years old and in the fifth grade, recently explained to me the distinction between fact and opinion. I was pleased to learn that she had a firm grasp of this vital distinction.

I was less pleased, however, when she went on to explain that in questions of fact there is a right answer and a wrong answer, while in matters of opinion there are no right and wrong answers. You and I may disagree in our opinions, but there is no way either one of us can prove the other to be mistaken; hence, we should tolerate one another's opinions and confine our disputes to matters of fact, where truth and error can be demonstrated. (I suppose she didn't use those precise words, but she said something along those lines.)

The discussion with my daughter bogged down when I bullied her by asking if her theory about fact and opinion was itself a fact. Or was it an opinion? If the former, it must be demonstrable; but it didn't appear to be. If the latter, it was neither true nor false; it was simply a personal preference; and I was therefore

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perfectly free to adopt a contrary personal preference.

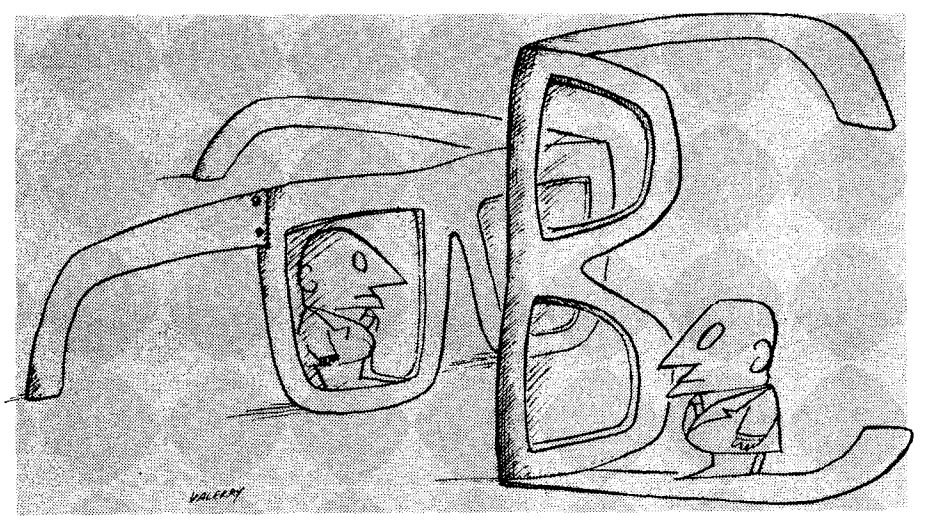
The dilemma I posed, which is essentially the same dilemma that has been posed to skeptics since antiquity, perplexed her, but it did not dislodge her from her position. She sensed, correctly enough, that the old man represents the views of an earlier age, an age that did not have the benefit of MTV and a modern education; so she had better cling to her insight and not succumb to my merely tricky arguments. We agreed to postpone further discussion of this topic till another day.

My daughter did not arrive at her epistemological views from volumes of David Hume that I carelessly leave lying around the house. Her taste in books runs to Beverly Cleary and The Babysitters Club, not Hume or his twentieth-century heirs, the logical positivists.

No, her epistemology comes from breathing the common intellectual air (or should I say, the common anti-intellectual air?) of late twentieth-century America. Nothing is more usual, especially among the younger generations, than the view that we ought to be perfectly tolerant of other people's opinions, since opinions are neither true nor false but merely matters of personal preference. Further, we ought to be *almost* perfectly tolerant of the actions that flow from these opinions—almost but not quite, since we obviously have to draw the line at actions which directly and tangibly harm others. Tolerance is the supreme virtue; the right to think as one pleases and to do as one pleases (short of picking the other fellow's pocket or breaking her leg) is the supreme privilege.

This tolerance, of course, has a very different tone from that championed by, say, John Locke or Roger Williams. It is not the tolerance of the person who takes truth seriously; who is prepared to battle for truth with weapons of persuasion while renouncing weapons of coercion; whose respect for truth is so great that one would not make it prevail through the use of unworthy instruments. The tolerance of the contemporary age is the tolerance of indifference. We abstain from persecution, not because our love of truth is so delicate and refined that we feel persecution to be a kind of sacrilege, but because we don't believe there is such a thing as truth beyond the realm of empirical facts. Why take the trouble to persecute on behalf of something in whose existence we don't even believe?

Though Roger Williams did not approve of Quakerism, his tolerance had made Rhode Island a haven for early Quakers. He chided Massachusetts for its persecution of the new sect; but when George Fox, the English founder of Quakerism, came to visit his disciples in Newport, Williams did not shrug his shoulders and say, "Who cares?" Instead, though past seventy years of age, he got in a boat and rowed the length of Narragansett Bay, from Providence to Newport, where in a public debate he attempted to show the errors of Fox's ways. Then he rowed home. That's heroic tolerance. The kind we have today is little more than mush.



This skepticism about all assertions that go beyond matters of empirical fact implies of course that we are debarred from passing judgments on matters of religion, morality, politics, and aesthetics. If opinions are merely preferences, how can we say that this religion is true, that false? Or that both have a part of the truth? Or that one has more truth than the other? How can we say that this work of art is superior to that? That Bartok is better than Barry Manilow? How can we say that liberal democracy is preferable to totalitarianism? And how can we even begin to discuss the morality of abortion or homosexuality?

I am not unmindful that many people who hold the skeptical-tolerant viewpoint as a matter of abstract principle often forget this principle when it comes down to cases. Professing to be nonjudgmental, they frequently rush to judgment, sometimes even quite sound judgments. But this is small consolation. Given enough time, abstract principles, no matter how little complied with at a particular moment, have a telling effect. To date, the skeptical-tolerant principle may not have totally destroyed our standards in morality, art, etc. But it has diminished them. It has made them fewer, smaller, less robust.

I'm not worried about my daughter. Though she has too much pride to let herself be talked out of a position by her old father's arguments, she has a strong tendency to thoroughness, an urge to get to the bottom of things. So the lack of profundity in the prevailing view is likely to drive her away from it before long.

But I do worry about the world at large, where the skeptical-tolerant viewpoint, already widespread, grows more popular every day. Under the amiable banner of "Live and Let Live" we are unconsciously sapping the very foundations of our civilization. While I don't think our world is about to fall apart any day soon, the current attitude should nonetheless give us pause. We inhabit a civilization built upon a number of nonempirical propositions. When we cease to believe in the very possibility of such propositions, I wonder just how long our house will be able to float in mid-air. □

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WHO DOESN'T LEAVE POLAND?

LEGEND SINGS ONLY ABOUT THE WINNERS

EWA BERBERYUSZ

During what is called the Week of Christian Culture, I attended a seminar on emigration in Warsaw's Redeemer Church. Aware though I am of what the subject of emigration portends for us Poles, I was astonished by the attendance—the church was bursting at the seams despite a torrential rain—and by the charged atmosphere of the meeting. Virtually all social and demographic strata were represented: many young people, even high school students (boys, mainly) as well as people of working age and older. It was a meeting that surprised me more than others of this kind.

For those who decide to emigrate from Poland, those who decide to stay are somehow suspect. The purity of their intentions is questioned and their voices are ignored. Not that they are eager to speak up; they know that every argument in favor of staying will meet with a massive rebuke by the emigrants. How can they counter the emigrants' charges of the "senselessness of it all," including work; the "stifling bureaucracy"; "how do you live without an apartment?" and, finally, "I don't want my kids to. . . ." Don't even try to tell them you are staying because you love your country. The term "your country" rings somehow false here; it's the loser's cliché, as lost as the fate of this generation's fathers and grandfathers.

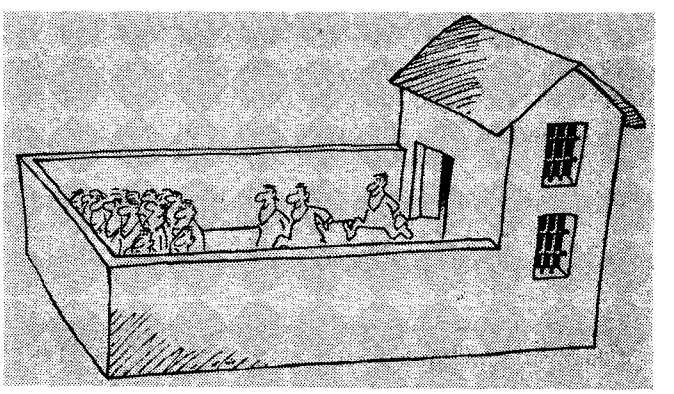
The emigrants are not only highly visible today, they have also become vociferous. True, people were leaving even during the Gierek era, but they did it quietly. Then, in the wake of the relaxation of passport laws in 1980, the river of emigration swelled up; the departures doubled. In those days, looking at the throngs of visa applicants at the foreign consulates, I mused naively: "There are fascinating things happening here, why do they want to leave?"

They were leaving, oblivious to the national euphoria around them. They were scared, at least some of them.

With Solidarity on the rise, historic things were happening in the cities of Poland, but the emigrants went on camping at the embassies, waiting obstinately for their turn to get a visa. The nation paid no attention to them. Engulfed in our Cause, we looked at them indifferently, the way you look at something fixed but insignificant in your cityscape. They are leaving. So what? They are running from the crisis, from their own fears. We regarded the emigrants in those days with a sense of tolerance, a principle which, we believed, we would finally be able to make good in Poland. Let everyone live where they wish. Let every citizen keep his or her passport in the drawer at home. Let the decision to emigrate be a matter to decide privately with the help of family and friends, and not the government bureaucrats and secret police. This is what democracy is all about. We believed we were marching toward it.

But time proved otherwise. On December 13, 1981 Poland's borders were slammed shut. All of a sudden, I found myself obsessed with the idea of, somehow, crawling out and into freedom. The shock of national loss manifested itself in different ways with different people. To many, it culminated in the inevitability of emigrating

As the government internment camps were emptied, the wave of emigration grew. This time it was not the anonymous element who were leaving but personalities well known in their communities, leaders who had been involved in the pre-martial-law processes. Now they were "forced" to leave. I put this word in quotation marks not to underrate the drama of such pressures, or to pass judgment on anyone. I do it merely to emphasize the fact that not all those under pressure to leave succumbed to it, even though the indomitable ones had their



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limits of endurance, too, under a combination of internal and external pressures.

It is normal for people to emigrate when things go wrong at home. The poor run from poverty and victims flee from oppressors. The Poles are no exception: all of the nineteenth century saw them migrating West, in search of either bread or freedom. However, while, historically, emigration was a sad necessity, today, in the minds of many, it's tantamount to liberation. Here lies the essential difference: rather than regret the necessity of leaving, Poles in 1988 regret it when they must stay at home. Even old people daydream: "If only I were a little younger, I wouldn't wait another minute."

What did the pope hear from the throngs who welcomed him last June in Poland? Not "stay with us!" as was the case before, even amidst the gloom of martial law. No, this time it was "take us with you!" This spontaneous cry from the depth of the heart expressed more than love for John Paul; it also carried a deep longing. "Take us!" they cried despite his admonitions that "it's necessary to stay." Even the love for the pope could not subdue the intense desire to leave this country. Our own Poland has become something to hate.

Who, then, wants to stay at home? Let's first try to determine who's leaving—the other side of the same coin. One hears horror stories about the fraudulent behavior of Polish emigrants, but nobody will convince me that these crowds who besiege Western embassies, jump ships, leave tourist buses with a single suitcase in hand, that all these Poles who populate refugee camps of Western Europe are nothing but a mass of conniving scamps. On the contrary, the criminally inclined are a marginal minority, as are those who run from unsolved personal problems. Sadly, one thief or psychopath is more visible than a thousand honest people who must suffer an undeserved odium.

So who's leaving? Mostly average Polish families, people referred to by the "people's" Polish media as being "in development." Only they have no hope of "developing" in their own country. Hopelessness, lack of a future, is a prevalent reality which, of course, translates into subjective motives in each individual case. It would be an oversimplification to assume that most of those who leave are people with a prospect of spending the rest of their lives in a one-bedroom apartment or "on the in-laws' backs." The poor, and they do exist in our country, never leave for the simple reason that they lack the means even to prepare for departure. Otherwise, there are people of dramatically differing means among the emigrants. The only thing they have in common is a universal disappointment—with the country, themselves, careers, jobs that lead nowhere. "What a country, what a country" they repeat, and these words comprise all the horror that has been described so many times.

The departure interrupts existential monotony, it requires ingenuity and multilevel preparations. They prepare for it meticulously, in stages, sometimes planning years in advance. They are experts in all the current exchange rates, in all the tricks of the trade, including such geopolitical nuances as that the refugee camps in Greece are "orientated" mainly to Australia, while those in West Germany and Italy to the United States. They also know that life in these camps is far from sweet. What they, perhaps, do not fully know is that, once they reach their target country, they will have to work their backs off in order to "make it." They would feel offended if you told them so. Their very reason for leaving is to escape from the "pretense of working" and to get a chance to "work for real." But two generations of a system that pays salaries—meager though they are—whether you work or pretend to work, whether your work makes sense or not, have made their way insidiously into the subconscious minds of many, destroying the old work ethic, and weakening the sense of responsibility for managing one's own life. These hidden problems strike back painfully when one is confronted with the reality of the Western world.

Young scientists and professionals are among the best adjusted among Polish emigrants. They face little uncertainty when going West. The "Polish boom" in the wake of martial law brought them a bounty of scholarships and exchange programs. The more substantial contracts that followed were no longer acts of mercy on the part of the West; they resulted from the fact that the Poles had proven themselves in their professions. For the Polish specialists it was a good experience, even if they did not "make it big." It was an experience that rid them of their unjustified inferiority complex vis-à-vis their Western colleagues. Some did make it big—those who could place their careers, literally, above everything else. Those who—as the Americans call it—were "most motivated." Those "less motivated" returned to Poland.

They were right to do so. There is a moment, a hard-to-perceive borderline, which, if crossed, renders return impossible. It occurs at different junctions for different people, but all are subjected to it, including those who failed miserably in their new homes. You don't hear much about them; legend sings only about the winners. But they do exist. The problem is that these emigrants have "unlearned" the Polish lifestyle while failing to learn that of their new homeland. The images of the land on the Vistula have paled in their hearts and minds. But, while the attraction of the old country lost its power, the new country never began to "attract." These people live in a state of suspension—a state that cannot last indefinitely because, quite simply, it's unbearable. Thus, consciously or not, people strive to get out of this "twilight zone" as soon as possible. One way is to force upon themselves a process of adjustment by purging their memories of everything that has anything to do with the old country. Sooner or later, the effort pays off, especially after a brief visit with relatives in Poland. Relieved, they say: "I wouldn't know how to live here any more." Or even: "I spent two weeks over there. It was two weeks too long."

You hear often from the emigrants that even a minimum living standard in the new country means a decent living. There's no denying it. However, the enjoyment of a living

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standard superior to that in Poland passes as fast as a dream. The scale of comparison is always relative: as time goes by, people cease to compare their condition with that in Poland, and begin to compare it with that of their new neighbors. The spinning wheel of unfulfilled desires starts to whir again.

To answer the question: Who stays? Quite simply, it is the same kind of people who leave. Within the same group of people who long for their own place to live, some emigrate, some don't. It's fashionable nowadays to talk about one's "roots." Yet, both those with impressive "roots" and those without them are leaving Poland in equal numbers. It is obviously untenable to theorize, as some do, that children of "patriotic Poles" do not emigrate, that only those whose image of Poland has become blurred, whose parents failed to instill a sense of duty toward the motherland are leaving the country today. The facts simply do not support this theory. Amazingly, even among the German Poles of Mazury or Opole—people who, even under independent Poland, were taught to resist "Polishness" for generations—some emigrate today, and some don't. Two brothers are brought up the same way in the same home; one emigrates and the other wouldn't even think about it. Why? That's something to ponder, especially for their parents, but not answer in definite terms.

Is there an all-encompassing answer? I don't know. When I hear the key words—identity, duty, responsibility, the roots (so often), motivation, personality—it seems that the answer is around the corner: "Warmer, warmer, let's drill here." But, as you are about to "drill," things get very complicated: each human case has its own answers. Is it possible to collate these answers, analyze them, and synthesize them into a coherent picture?

For a long time, on various occasions such as the colloquy at Warsaw's Redeemer Church, I asked people: *Why do you remain in Poland?* The answers I received were vastly different in form and content. Some were immediate and self-assured. Some came after a long, embarrassed pause. Some were accompanied by a request for anonymity. Some came with a full name. Some arrived scribbled hastily on a piece of paper, others in the form of a lengthy soliloquy.

WHY DO YOU STAY IN POLAND?

Physiologist, Medical Academy: Why do I walk, breathe, eat, drink, sleep? Would you ask this question of a citizen of France, England, Italy? Being here is the normal condition for me. A normal condition requires no justification. I am at home here, for centuries.

Engineer, returned from South Africa: It's difficult to be happy in Poland, but it's much easier to be unhappy somewhere else.

Physician, female: My life somewhere else would be somehow unreal, like behind a glass panel.

Physician, anesthesiologist: I couldn't. First dad was ill, now mom is old.

Nutritionist: I am not the type to leave. I am an optimist.

Physical laborer: A man can be himself anywhere. But my father would be ashamed to tell people I'd left. I can't do it to him.

Mining engineer, German background: Over there, big money and loneliness; over here, little money and lots of good friends. I chose the latter.

High school student, comfortable family conditions: I was only waiting to graduate to split, but then I met some fantastic folks at the Academic Evangelical Organization and, what do you know, I am not leaving.

High school student: I'm staying. Poland is my homeland. My brother emigrated to the U.S.

Candy factory worker: This is my country. I want to work for it, for a better tomorrow, even if it sounds funny, I'd say even if it doesn't sound serious.

Attorney: (Recites a verse by Poland's leading poet) "I long for this land, O Lord, where they bend to pick up a breadcrumb out of respect for Thy gifts. . . ."

Polish Jew returned from Israel: You see, my "roots" became inflamed. The roots of attachment to the country where I was born.

Geologist: I was looking at the Rocky Mountains and my mind was in the Tatras.

Architect: I care about everything over here. I don't care about anything over there.

Journalist (about his son who emigrated): Just think of it, I would have my hands chopped off for this country, and he. . . ."

Construction technician: Over here a cabby and I understand each other without words.

Steel mill worker: No way! My wife would never agree!

Welder: It would be like jumping the *Titanic* before women and children.

Physical laborer: Because my son said he would go to live with his aunt if we decide to leave.

Physicist: Where in America can we have a conversation like this? Like the one we are having right now?

Biologist, female: Even though equal in professional terms, I was always an "ethnic" over there.

Epidemiologist: Their conversations are so terribly boring at those "parties" of theirs.

Computer expert: Money and money alone; I couldn't care less about such a philosophy.

Psychologist: Over here, you must make choices all the time, and it's fascinating.

Biochemist: Leaving means a definite professional degradation over there. Here I don't have a heated swimming pool, but I count.

Woman who makes her living knitting sweaters: You see, those sunsets over the Kosciuszko Mount. We won't leave because of them.

Famous surgeon: I am known here. I make all the crucial decisions, including how we train future surgeons, those who will operate on me in the future. Over there, I would have been merely one efficient technician on a fat payroll.

Physicist returned from a successful assignment in France: In Poland nobody will ask me: "Where are you from, and why

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are you throwing your weight around?''

Teacher, female: My father used to ask my mother (during the Nazi occupation): ''Do you think it will last much longer?'' That's exactly what I keep on telling my kids.

Scientist employed by the Polish Academy of Sciences: I hate our everyday chores; I hate the cold heaters in our apartments; I hate dry faucets and queues at the food stores. But the homeland is an ethical proposition. I am staying because I love Poland. I love this universe of values, this heritage.

I cannot forget what a young boy told me: that those who leave are mainly those estranged from their environment. People who feel injured, even if it's only in their own minds. People who find no support in their communities, professional or otherwise. They are socially lonely, utterly without hope. These words do not pretend to be a synthesis, but they are close to my heart. If I were to drill, it would be here. ''Hope'' is the key word for the Poles. It's a key that opens an enormous field for apostolic work, for every man and woman of good will.

At the Redeemer's Church, I stared at the parents whose children had left. They were silent, reflective. I was not prepared for the drama of this group. The drama of empty walls, and desperate compensatory endeavors.

After the colloquy, I was given a lift by a couple. It was pouring cats and dogs. They invited me to dinner at their home. The ''Polish Cause'' loomed large throughout the evening. Later the conversation skidded to more personal topics. My hosts' daughter and son-in-law are making a brilliant career at one of America's leading universities. Their son has just been promoted as a lecturer. But there is sadness in their joy. □

LET THE BISHOPS TAKE NO GUFF

AN INTERVIEW WITH ELIOT JANEWAY

DAVID TOOLAN

Eliot Janeway started the debate over the impact of political pressures on commerce and financial trends in 1935. Now, fifty years later, his thesis that Washington, not Wall Street, is the place to look for the key to market direction, is widely accepted. Educated at Cornell University and the London School of Economics, he became Business Editor of *Time* at the age of twenty-five. Janeway's articles in *Fortune* were the first to raise the subject of economic mobilization of national resources for strategic planning. His *The Struggle for Survival* (1951) is the definitive history of economic mobilization before and after Pearl Harbor.

Janeway now heads his own financial consulting firm, publishes the *Janeway Letter*, and contributes regularly to the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *Barron's Financial Weekly*.

TOOLAN: What is your reaction to the bishops' letter on the U.S. economy?

JANEWAY: The bishops write: ''Our faith calls us to measure this economy not only by what it produces, but also by how it touches human life and whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person.'' This criterion of judgment is consonant with, and in the great tradition of, the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, and the Declaration of Independence. It is in the mainstream of congressional legislation and the decisions of our courts. The bishops' letter asks for a practical commitment to the rights of the living. I'm glad to see that. How can you be for the rights of the fetus and not be for the rights of the successors to the fetus?

I recall a conversation I once had with the late Justice William O. Douglas. He said, ''If the Constitution which we're called upon to interpret had meant us to grant sovereign attributes to the market and thus to pure, economic efficiency, it would have been written differently. We're enjoined by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights to subordinate the claims for efficiency to the interests of human well-being.'' Justice Douglas's view, from the judicial standpoint, converges with the message of the bishops. So let the bishops take no guff!

Besides, if the claims made for the forces of supply and demand were correct, there never would have been an oil inflation.

TOOLAN: What do you mean?

JANEWAY: In 1979, I was asked how long inflationary oil prices would continue, and I was quoted in the *Wall Street Journal* as saying ''until these dumbbells who run the major oil companies run themselves out of storage space.'' No one took me seriously. But the oil shortage was a joke, a sham. The *Wall Street Journal* ran one of those front page stories which begins one way and ends the other on the inside page. The front page claimed that prices would go up from forty to eighty

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dollars— because the demand would continue high and the supply was low. Doing the other side of the figure eight, the inside page carried an interview with a Gulf Oil manager in Newfoundland—known to be the shortest in oil supply of any region in North America. Any time there is a glut in this region, you know there's a super glut everywhere else. So why had the Gulf manager shut down his refinery? The manager said they had run out of storage space. They were full up. Which should have meant that the price would come down. Of all the things we know that aren't so, the working of the law of supply and demand tops the list.

TOOLAN: But even the Simon-Novak statement, *Toward the Future*, conceded that there was no such thing as a perfectly free market. What bothers these gentlemen is government intervention that may harm productivity, innovation, and our competitive edge.

JANEWAY: Let's address that right now. Bill Simon is out there buying every Savings and Loan institution he can find—yes, taking advantage of government insurance of the property and not making mortgage loans. I don't see Bill buying any uninsured banks. He can't have it both ways. He operates under the protective wing of the government. God bless him, he's welcome to it. But I hope the bishops stand their ground.

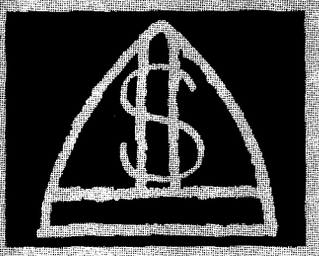
There's plenty of room for both the public and private sectors. Each has its functions, and they had best cooperate. Is there anyone who denies that education is a public sector responsibility? Or anyone who thinks that the census or labor statistics ought to be privatized? These are built-in public sector responsibilities, and they're as necessary to economics as breathing. If you don't provide these services, it's panic.

Unless you get the public and private sector to mesh like the teeth of a gear, you're going to have chaos. This abstract argument about public and private initiative is a war of words. The words become our captors and we lose control of our lives. What we want from a president is policy.

I know of no one who is for a strong defense who is against government involvement in many aspects of the economy. Including George Bush, who wants to be president. I mean you can't have a strong defense by getting a bunch of kids to walk around with broomsticks. The government has to be involved.

At the same time, the military spending system is a more complex problem than either the bishops or advocates of a strong defense seem to realize. The greatest challenge fiscal reformers face is dealing with the way the Pentagon makes long-range commitments. For instance, think of that $45 billion, fifteen-year contract the Navy just let for a new plane. The down payment in the first year was $214,000. The way the Pentagon works, the plane will come in in the twenty-third year for $94 billion and be unusable. There's no way government spending, with or without a balanced budget imperative, can deal with such shenanigans.

TOOLAN: Some critics say that the bishops should stick to moral principles and not get involved in policy recommendations regarding welfare reform, agriculture, and third-world debt. Is that a problem?



David Toolan's interview and the following articles, "Executives' Scoreboard," by T.R. Martin and Gene R. Laczniak and "Engaging Words," by Francis DeBernardo, are the last in *Commonweal*'s series examining different aspects of the U.S. bishops' pastoral, *Economic Justice for All*. Articles previously published in the series are available in back-copies ($1.50 each, 10 or more, $1 each). These include "Resurrecting the Common Good," by Robert N. Bellah (December 18, 1987); "What's Become of the Pastoral?" by Karen Sue Smith (December 18, 1987); "Counter-power in San Antonio," by Henry Cisneros (February 12, 1988); "The Bishops and Their Critics," a survey of five books on the pastoral reviewed by William M. Sullivan and Richard Madsen (February 26, 1988); and "You Get What You Pay For," by Norbert L. Riegert (April 8, 1988).

JANEWAY: Well, the bishops are either in it or they're not. If they're in it, they're involved in policy; they are participants.

TOOLAN: Do you have reservations about the bishops' letter?

JANEWAY: I think there's a problem with their notion of the poor. It's too static—and needs to be related to demographics. Before you can evaluate whether the standard of living is rising or falling, you have to pay attention to the population—a completely nonideological, apolitical matter. What is the age distribution? How many people are productively employed? What ratio is productively employable? How many of them are not productively employed? How many are supported by those productively employed—or employable? And what are you going to do with the rest? Demographics are key.

Moreover, the problem of poverty in our country must be linked to the dynamics of our continuous technological revolution. In turn, any resolution to the human costs of rapid technological change requires attention to education. The laxity of secular education in this country is the biggest drag on the economy. Those high school dropouts don't have the skill to get into a high tech economy. The bishops could have made these linkages clearer.

Moreover, the poor as we have known them are going to find their ranks radically augmented by new recruits not heretofore regarded as poor. We need to update our concept of the poor to allow for a growing middle-class membership.

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TOOLAN: Your concern, then, is a growing underclass?

JANEWAY: Yes. The bishops' hearts are in the right place. But like all the Nobel Prize winners in economics of this century, they fail to make the connection to changing technology. What worries me is the growing gap between society and the working economy, that a growing proportion of the society is like a detached retina. In recent years, the gap has widened. And this becomes a very dangerous source of social trauma and violence in society.

In the time period since the letter was published, the condition of the poor has suffered radical deterioration. Automation leaves no place and shows no mercy to those unable to keep up with its pace. In the nineteenth century we thought of automation as the enemy of employment. It is not the enemy of employment. It is, however, the excluder of the illiterate. If provision isn't made to change their status, to extend the dynamics of the society to their situation, they won't simply be the poor; they will be disabled.

TOOLAN: In the bishops' terms, you're talking about "economic rights."

JANEWAY: Let's not call it economic rights. Let's call it social obligation. We desperately need more vocational education. Church schools, among others, should be radically reorienting themselves to do the job. There's plenty of work to be done, rebuilding roads and bridges, the decaying infrastructure of our economy. If we did away with overtime in the defense industry, we could add employment there. We reclaim soil. We reclaim scrap metal, reclaim scrap paper. Why can't we reclaim people? The next time we have a boom, we'll have an inflationary disaster if we don't make provision to get these bodies into the economy. And we can't do that unless they're trained and healthy.

TOOLAN: You have spoken elsewhere of the declining middle class. What's your point there?

JANEWAY: What I fear will happen if things go bad with the economy—and I believe they are headed that way—is that we'll see a dramatic increase in the numbers of the poor and these numbers will be former middle-class people. It is already happening in Germany.

TOOLAN: Are you suggesting that the bishops' "preferential option for the poor" might well have been aimed at the average parishioner?

JANEWAY: You've got it. Your average hard-working, church-belonging middle-class family is in very poor financial shape today. Their basic capital consists of a $53,000 home—which carries a $219,000 mortgage. They've been borrowing on it for years to send their children through college or whatever. And typically, the place is in lousy repair and not easily salable. Any ordinary disaster, an illness or loss of job, can easily drop them into the ranks of the homeless.

TOOLAN: Do you think we're in for a crash much worse than what we saw on last October's Black Monday?

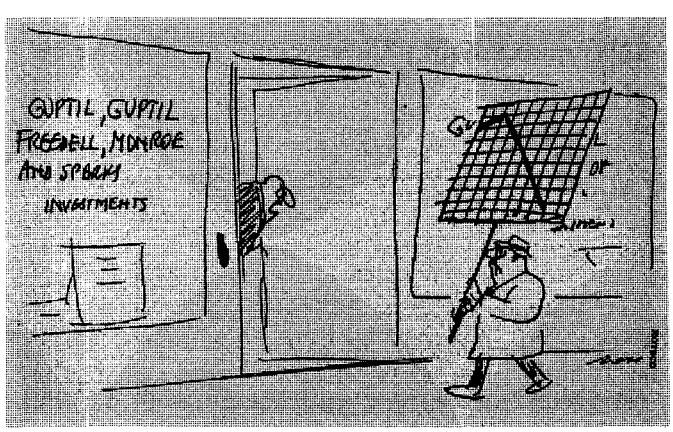
JANEWAY: I do. Now that the real estate market is buckling everywhere, and the financial services boom has gone bad, there are no strong segments left in the economy. Statistical superficiality, plus outright official fraud, are concealing the accelerated deterioration of the economy. Since January, when the government claimed 150,000 new retail jobs were created, retail sales have been a disaster.

The government admits it has no reliable data on inventories, where the trouble is. It has no data sorting out the impact of price-cutting on volume of goods moved. The export data lump sales for cash, credit, and barter, another gross distortion. Yet statistical hype dominates the media.

The trouble goes far deeper than the touted power of the Federal Reserve Board to tinker with palliatives. No monetary manipulation can reach the source of dislocation. Debts have outrun the ability of incomes to pay interest plus expenses; and debt is rising while incomes are eroding. It's a toss-up whether debtors or creditors are hurting most. Either way, incomes shrink, cutting the consumer economy back drastically. Improvement in export figures can't begin to make up for volume losses on the consumer side, especially with imports on the rise. As the consumer goes, so goes the economy. Debt troubles plus income fears are stifling the half-century consumer boom.

The fact of the matter is that right now business is trapped in marked-up inventory that customers won't take; which guarantees a long siege of sellers chasing buyers with price cuts and contingency shipments while activity stalls. By the time 1988's victory of debts over income has taken its toll, the country will be begging for another dose of inflation.

TOOLAN: We keep hearing economists say the bishops' hearts are in the right place, *but*. . . . Could you give a specific example of the "but"?



"Beat it, or I'll call the cops."

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JANEWAY: I take pragmatic exception when they call for a "new American experiment" that calls for "cooperative ownership." It seems to me that this would be tokenism. The responsibility of employers is to employ. The right of employees is to be compensated. The most palpable fraud perpetrated on the work force is done in the name of power sharing. Your "new American experiment" has already been tried in Europe. Whenever an industry went bad in Europe, you socialized it—and the former owners wound up in the south of France on yachts.

The division of labor makes sense. Why should the worker take responsibility for the mistakes of bad management? It seems to me that you're taking enough of a risk where your livelihood is without compounding that risk by investing in it.

TOOLAN: Do you think the bishops have unrealistic expectations of the U.S. economy?

JANEWAY: To some extent, yes. I'd like to go back to the demographics of the American economy. In conceptual terms, visualize two parallel assembly lines entirely different yet supplemental to one another, each moving continuously without interruptions. One bears paper, installment paper, mortgage paper, financial instruments—the debt structure, money. The other, the demographic line of the society, bears people, as the phrase goes, from cradle to grave. The bishops come down foursquare on the obligation of society to the continuity of employment, to the continuity of priorities for human need and human values.

The bishops don't consider the business cycle, those interruptions, periodic slumps, recessions. The dilemma is this: The economy can't go into boom with the unemployable poor on its back; moreover, the poor—and I also mean the new middle-class poor—can't enjoy even their present level of security, however little that is, if the economy goes into a tailspin.

TOOLAN: Is there some way to bring your two assembly lines into relative synch?

JANEWAY: Part of the solution is to take the poor along with us, to catch them up in the dynamics of the new technology by raising their educational capability and their incomes—so that they become part of what drives the economy to produce. It's in everybody's self-interest to see that this happens, to see that they can pay their own way.

The trouble with the bishops' good intentions is that they don't have a workable plan for putting them into effect. I think I have one, a proposal I am about to make in my new book. What I've come up with is a new source of capital investment that's been right under our noses all these years since the New Deal. I mean social security funds. We haven't been utilizing them as capitalists should—or as good socialists should want to. Right now, a person pays into this fund and, in return, is guaranteed an old age in near penury. What kind of deal is that? The way I see it, these funds can be used more creatively—both as capital and for the purpose of extending the social contract.

Why not do with a fraction of these funds what the insurance companies now do with their investments? Instead of putting their funds exclusively into government treasury bonds—which are not going to make any money—the insurance companies take a fraction of their money—usually about 3 percent of it—and invest it in blue chip stocks like the AT&T. Assuming that the economy grows, that investment will appreciate much faster and have a higher annual return than government securities will. We ought to do the same with social security funds.

TOOLAN: What final mark would you give the bishops for their effort?

JANEWAY: Well, the bishops are on terrain they're not familiar with. Except for the expert advice they were given, they're doing all right, groping in the right direction, no apologies needed. Full steam ahead. □

Regina deCormier-Shekerjian

The woman who steals ham bones

When no one is looking.
From friends. Acquaintances. Anyone
who carelessly leaves the bone
parted from its redolent meat
untended on the table. Into
the bag slung over her shoulder,
when no one is looking, goes the heart
of the next pot of pea soup,
the bony heart, the generous heart,
that gives itself slowly, unstintingly,
asking no questions. She whispers
to the pot some words
untranslatable, unalphabetized, something
summoning a belief so stern it disappears
if she forgets,
even for a single moment, the idea
of bone,
not as holy relic under glass,
but bone as calcareous tissue,
hinged, in its cancellous parts marrow,
the marrow of memory—bone,
the ache and triumph of bone
faithful to its duty until, fallen
from dubious grace, it attains grace
in the kitchen of the woman who steals
ham bones.

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EXECUTIVES' SCOREBOARD

CEOs RESPOND TO THE ECONOMICS PASTORAL

T.R. MARTIN &
GENE R. LACZNIAK

When the Catholic bishops of the United States announced in 1984 their intention to prepare a pastoral letter on the U.S. economy, the general reaction among business managers was skeptical at best, antagonistic at worst. Between the announcement and the publication of the final draft in November 1986 not much changed insofar as the reaction was concerned. And even now, the business community's evaluation of the merits of the letter remains decidedly negative.

The bishops have been challenged on two points: their warrant to make such a pronouncement, especially their economic competence to do so; and the actual content of the document. The warrant argument aside, just where do business leaders stand on the issues addressed by the bishops? Are they really as negative about the bishops' economic proposals as the press reports?

In order to probe this question, we conducted a poll of immediate past CEOs of large U.S. corporations. (The sample of 750 was drawn from *Forbes*'s list of the thousand largest U.S. corporations; past CEOs were chosen because of common corporate policy not to respond to opinion polls.) Usable returns were received from seventy-one ex-CEOs, almost all of whom still serve as corporate directors.

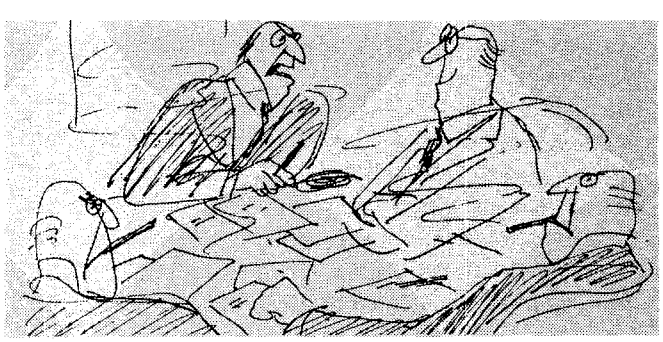
In the survey, twenty-three statements from the pastoral letter, pertinent to the concerns of business managers, were posed verbatim, and the participants were asked to choose among five options from "strongly agree," to "strongly disagree." The responses to the survey show that the bishops and executives see the world rather differently, especially on economic matters.

The bishops believe that to be a Christian calls for the application of Christian moral principles to all aspects of life, including the economic realm. In the pastoral letter, they apply these principles specifically to poverty, unemployment, agriculture, and the development of the third world. All but two of the former CEOs identified themselves as Christians and presumably share the bishops' Christian beliefs. But they show a strong attachment to another view, that of capitalism. When these two ways of looking at the world overlap, the CEOs agree strongly with the bishops' propositions. And although the two views are not necessarily antithetical, when they seem to clash, the CEOs' agreement with the bishops tends to wither and sometimes even disappear.

To illustrate: The letter states, "in order to protect basic justice, government should undertake only those initiatives which exceed the capacity of individuals or private groups acting independently." This "principle of subsidiarity" corresponds to the tenets of limited government, a bedrock of capitalist beliefs. The CEOs overwhelmingly agree with this statement. On the other hand, the letter says that "industrial cooperation requires a strong role for labor unions in our changing economy." This elicited the second highest disagreement score from our respondents, and sums up a significant portion of the businessman's creed: small government, weak unions, and low corporate taxes.

The highest disagreement scored was garnered by the letter's most basic theme, the "preferential option for the poor." The bishops "find the disparities of income and wealth in the United States to be unacceptable." The CEOs disagreed. And they were distinctly negative about the bishops' assertion "that so many people are poor in a nation as rich as ours is a social and moral scandal." One respondent wrote, "the principle of taking from the rich to give to the poor—according to their needs—is professed to be followed in Communist countries."

On the other hand, these retired top managers agreed rather strongly that "all members of society have a special obligation to the poor and vulnerable," so their view does not appear to



"If you're trying to interject love into this transaction, Lolich, it's not going to work."

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be so far removed from the bishops' as their opposition to the preferential option suggests. More likely, they are drawing a distinction between the behavior they try to practice in their private lives and their perceived responsibilities to the corporate world.

Another bedrock of capitalist ideology is the pursuit of profit. The bishops say, "the Christian ethic is incompatible with a primary or exclusive focus on maximization of profit." The CEO's clearly disagree. For the capitalist, the primary (but probably not exclusive) focus should be on profit which implies a vigorous effort to be efficient, to take risks, to make private investment, to create wealth, etc. The bishops would not disagree with the legitimacy and value of the driving force of profit, but what they see as an overemphasis thereon strikes them as being out of conformity with Christian moral principles.

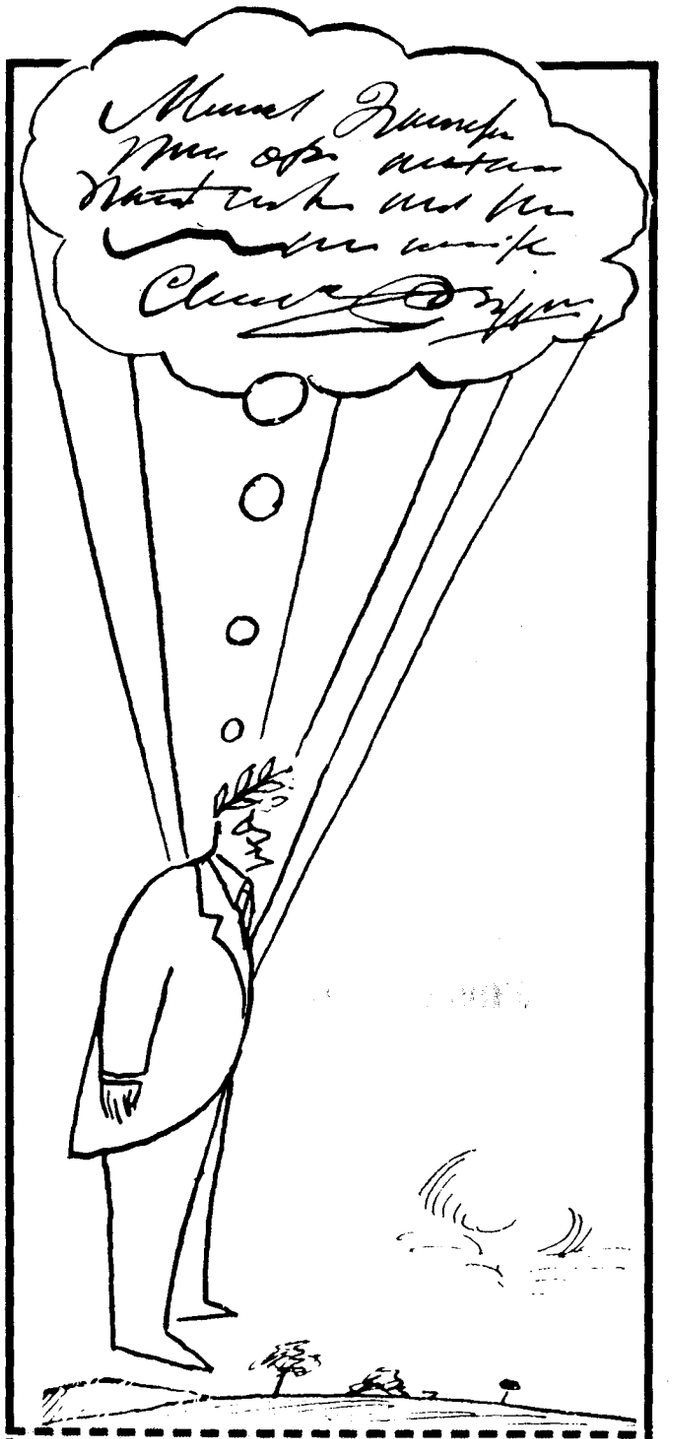
Several statements referred to employment issues. Aside from the disagreement on unionism, the executives and the bishops were not so far apart as might be expected. The former CEOs were surprisingly favorable toward employees' sharing in the ownership of their employer firms, the right of all to participate in the nation's economic life, public training and apprenticeship programs, and full employment policies.

Most startling, perhaps, was the level of agreement (about 50 percent) with the claim that employment is a basic right. If employment is a fundamental right, then it follows that someone has a corresponding obligation. This implies that if the private sector does not provide sufficient jobs, the public sector must pick up the slack. That is, employment is too important an issue to be left entirely to the vicissitudes of free-market forces. A rather favorable executive attitude toward affirmative action also emerges (51 percent are in favor), especially when viewed against the initial corporate opposition to it.

The respondents were also invited to make comments about the letter, and a considerable number did. Typical observations were "naive," "unrealistic," and "lack of economic understanding." Few were any more flattering than "good intentions." A number labeled the bishops' perspective as "socialistic" or even further left-wing. It is problematic to quantify spontaneous comments, but it is not difficult to conclude that the CEOs do not think highly of the bishops' effort taken as a whole.

Given the clearly negative overall reaction of the CEOs, it would be reasonable to expect a high degree of consensus among them in their responses, but this is not the case. The participants agreed among themselves on somewhat less than 60 percent of the statements; on the other 40-plus percent, they did not. On the matter of taxation based on ability to pay, the vote was almost evenly divided. Thus, while businessmen like low taxes, many feel these should at least be "progressive."

In view of the wide disparity in the reactions to many of the pastoral's propositions, it is fair to say that no one, not even bishops, can relate Christian concepts to the assumptions implicit in the classical capitalistic model and still find broad support among executives. There is simply too much collec-



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tive ambivalence among the business leaders on this score.

The bishops have a problem, but it is not primarily their failure to understand worldly matters. Christian moral principles and free-market principles do not spring from totally compatible sources. The hallmark of the marketplace is efficiency. When managers formulate discretionary policy, their decisions are usually predicated on utilitarian theory, i.e., take the action if economic benefits exceed costs. Christian concepts, applied in the business realm, are more equity-oriented. They stress social justice outcomes in order to provide special benefits for those who are least well off. ("As you did it to one of the least of my brethren, you did it to me.")

The bishops are not against the notion of efficiency but wish to see it tempered by social justice. The executives are not necessarily opposed to that, especially if it is expressed in terms of Christian charity, but while it tugs them in one direction, the efficiency imperative, a fixture in the corporate culture, pulls them in another. When acting out their roles as managers, they are heavy buyers of utilitarian theory. The bishops are committed to a different view. Since these two approaches differ fundamentally in orientation, a philosophical clash is a logical outcome. That is our hypothesis. □

ENGAGING WORDS

THE BISHOPS GET THEIR MESSAGE ACROSS

FRANCIS DeBERNARDO

The Lord has given me a well-trained tongue that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them.

Isaiah knew something that many prophets, modern and ancient, fail to recognize: no matter how righteous, their message alone will probably not persuade the people they most want to influence. Something more, a well-trained tongue, is needed if people are to hear a message and act on it.

When the U.S. bishops issued *Economic Justice for All*, they presented a document very much in keeping with the prophetic tradition. First, they performed the prophetic task of looking at a familiar situation with the eyes of faith and made observations that are not always obvious to the general public. Second, the bishops took some unpopular positions and called for some radical changes. And third, they were sensitive to the way their message was presented to their audience.

The letter achieves its degree of persuasiveness because the bishops have mastered the art of rhetoric. This is not to say that they have joined the ranks of pushy used-car salesmen, ambitious politicians, and emotional televangelists, or that they have surreptitiously tried to sell themselves or their ideas. Rather, the bishops have constructed their discourse and chosen words that speak to a wide variety of people actively involved in the real world. In fact, the letter's rhetorical quality is what makes it truly pastoral.

Since the bishops wanted their ideas on economics to be taken seriously, they had to persuade readers, through argument, organization, and language, that their point of view and analysis were valid. Furthermore, Catholics are not the only, nor even the most influential, economic actors in the situations the letter describes. By necessity then, the pastoral had to address both Catholics and non-Catholics, believers and non-believers, and to persuade even many Catholics that the bishops had something to say on economic matters.

To be rhetorically effective is to find and illuminate the common ground of facts and values that the audience and the author share. Persuasiveness is not achieved by simply offering logical proofs or by appealing to authority, but by mustering convincing arguments. In the bishops' pastoral letter on the economy, rhetoric exeeds the art of persuasion to become the art of reconciliation.

The bishops had to reconcile Catholic social teaching with American economic and social thought. They wanted to relate the "rich and complex tradition of Catholic life and thought" to the problems of the American economic system. Do these two bodies of knowledge have common points or intersections? If the bishops could not demonstrate them, their thoughts on economics would have remained peculiarly their own.

But evidence of the "well-trained tongue" is found in the bishops' ability to make Catholic social teaching accessible and acceptable—even to those "outside the gates." First of all, they did not choose an antagonistic posture. Instead, they emphasized similarities and common ground. Catholic social thought is presented, not as authoritative teaching (since that is not the case for the entire audience), but as a solution to a problem. "We believe," the bishops wrote, "that in facing these questions [concerning the state of the U.S. economy] the Christian religious and moral tradition can make an important contribution."

In offering their tradition as compatible with, not as com-

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peting against, secular values, the bishops use arguments of association, a common rhetorical vehicle, that two experts define as "schemes which bring separate elements together and allow us to establish a unity among them which aims either at organizing them or at elevating them, positively or negatively by means of one another" (Chaim Perelman and Lucy Olbrects-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, Notre Dame, 1969).

The bishops write: "Human understanding and religious belief are complementary, not contradictory. For human beings are created in God's image and their dignity is manifest in the ability to reason and understand." And they show how it is feasible for the world to accept Catholic social teaching not because of its inherent religious authority, but because of its rational and practical humanistic underpinnings: "What the Bible and Christian tradition teach, human wisdom confirms. Centuries before Christ, the Greeks and Romans spoke of the human person as a social animal made for friendships, community, and public life. . . . These convictions have a biblical basis. They are also supported by a long tradition of theological and philosophical reflection and through reasoned analysis of human experience by contemporary men and women." Catholic social teaching, the bishops note, was created by "thinkers who synthesized the call of Christ with the philosophical learning of Greek, Roman, Jewish, and Arab worlds."

Equally important, the text of the pastoral letter illustrates how religious texts themselves can speak to more than an exclusively religious audience. The Bible, they point out, is a source of human and ethical wisdom, as well as religious values: "We must also attend to the Bible's deeper vision of God, of the purposes of creation, and of the dignity of human life in society."

While these examples indicate how the bishops demonstrate that their religious thought has its secular coordinates, the other major argument of association they employ shows just the reverse: that the secular world has in it elements of the sacred. Perhaps the bishops' most powerful and important statements are not the ones that deal with the preferential option for the poor or a new economic agenda, but those at the beginning of the letter which define the economic realm. "The economy," they write, "is a human reality: men and women working together to develop and care for the whole of God's creation. It influences what people hope for themselves and their loved ones. It affects the way they act together in society. It influences their very faith in God. . . . Serious economic choices go beyond purely technical issues to fundamental questions of value and human purpose."

The reason these sentences are so important is that they wrest economics from a purely autonomous, secular realm and unite it with an ethical, religious one. The bishops have accomplished what Stanley Hauerwas says must be done in the era of postliberal theology: refuse to let the secular world set the agenda.

This associative stance is also applied when the letter discusses American values. The bishops show how their religious ideas and American values often share similar goals. Some examples: "Christian conviction and the American promise of liberty and justice for all give the poor and the vulnerable a special claim on the nation's concern"; "Christian faith and the norms of justice impose distinct limits on what we consume and how we view material goods."

While the bishops ultimately become critical of the American system, they soften what could be perceived as antagonism by showing that their critical attitude and their ideas are based on their own American values. They cite Abraham Lincoln as a model of their concern in fighting to complete the "unfinished business in the American experiment in freedom and justice for all":

> The task of the United States today is as demanding as that faced by our forebears. Abraham Lincoln's words at Gettysburg are a reminder that complacency today would be a betrayal of our nation's history: "It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work . . . they have thus far nobly advanced."

In addition, they praise the U.S. system for its ability to correct itself and to be open to change, not just because of financial problems, but because of human necessity:

> [While] the U.S. value system emphasizes economic freedom, it also recognizes that the market is limited by fundamental human rights. This conviction has prompted positive steps to modify the operation of the market when it harms vulnerable members of society.

What the bishops have done here is to emphasize "human rights," not "the market" as the guiding principle of American economic policies. This approach allows them to offer the principles of Catholic social teaching as a common ground for examining society. But it does something else, as well. It reminds Americans that, like Catholics, they also have a history that is concerned about the oppressed. Later in the document the bishops use the examples of the women's suffrage crusade, the Civil Rights Movement, and child labor reform to show that Americans have a critical heritage that emphasizes human values and ethical concerns.

Similarly, the roles the bishops adopt for themselves work as a rhetorical act of unity. They present themselves in a variety of ways: "as Americans," "as bishops," "as pastors," "as Catholics," as people "called to shape a constituency of conscience," and "as moral teachers, not economic technicians." This multiplication of roles allows a variety of audiences to identify with them and entertain their insights and ideas. It lets the bishops be identified as religious by those who are religious. Yet, for those who can't identify with their religious charism, it allows the bishops to speak from the more general position of moral leaders. The bishops have thus taken advantage of the variety of roles they enjoy in society. In bringing to mind these various roles, they have chosen to include, rather than exclude.

The types of evidence the bishops cite to make their argument also add to the letter's persuasive and unitive potentiali-

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ties. Since they are "moral teachers, not economic technicians," the bishops rely on more than statistics and facts. They deal instead with values. To make their case they emphasize that the economy has shortchanged human and moral goals, rather than emphasizing that the economy isn't fulfilling its fiscal goals. For instance, unemployment is a problem, not simply because of production, but because it "gnaws at the self-respect of both middle-aged persons who have lost jobs and the young who cannot find them."

An important side-effect of the letter's rhetorical construction is that it makes the tradition of Catholic social teaching available to a great number of Catholics for whom it is still an alien body of knowledge. As the debates during the drafting process illustrated, many Catholics do not count as part of their tradition that their bishops speak on such secular matters as social policy.

Archbishop Rembert Weakland, chairman of the committee that drafted the letter, admitted that many Catholics would find the pastoral to be a step beyond the traditional boundaries of religion. Eugene Kennedy has noted that Weakland "acknowledges that the American Catholic church has, to the puzzlement of some of its believers, extended its focus beyond their personal lives to their professional lives, identifying them as organically related and bringing an end to the days when religion could be considered a private devotional affair, a garden walled off from the larger world" (*Re-imagining American Catholicism*, Vintage-Random House, 1985).

The bishops cite a number of biblical and magisterial documents to argue that it is the duty of religious people to be involved in other than ecclesial and devotional matters. For authority they quote from Vatican II: "the joys and hopes, the grief and anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the grief and anxieties of the followers of Christ." They quote Paul VI as well: "Christian communities have the responsibility to analyze with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel's unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgment, and directives for action from the social teaching of the church."

Yet while these authoritative statements are important, the bishops' ability to connect organically the economic world with the ecclesial, spiritual, and moral world, is probably the letter's strongest long-term contribution. Demonstrating that such a unity exists will help to repair the "tragic separation between faith and everyday life" that the bishops deplore.

Judging the effectiveness of the letter is no easy task. Change comes slowly. Weakland has noted that what the letter has accomplished is a "re-imagining of American Catholicism" that begins "to address serious discussions of the major issues of our times." The bishops have taken the first step in this process by demonstrating their rhetorical imagination.

The pastoral letter has been transformed from a genre that could address only Catholics to one that speaks impressively to the larger secular audience.

David Kreuger, an editor for *The Christian Century*, has observed another effect. In a 1985 editorial, "Bishops, Business, and the Unfinished Task," he wrote that the economics pastoral's greatest success is that it has "provoked a public debate on the morality of the U.S. economy characterized by a level of moral seriousness which is precious to the public life of a democratic nation."

That would please the bishops. Buried in the middle of an otherwise unremarkable passage on pages 43-44 of the pastoral is what may be their bottom line in this letter, their own standard for judging how effective they have been: "There is certainly room for diversity of opinion in the church and in U.S. society on how to protect the human dignity and economic rights of all our brothers and sisters. In our view, however, there can be no legitimate disagreement on the basic moral objectives."

In Kreuger's analysis, the bishops have been successful because they have achieved a common ground. The letter is effective, not because their program has been adopted (it hasn't), or even because it has been widely read (it has), but because its language and ideas have become part of the broader, ongoing debate. This has been achieved not only because of the letter's strength and vision, but because the bishops have learned how to use their prophetic and "well-trained tongue." □

SCREEN

TWO HEROES

'CRY OF REASON' & 'DELIVER'

With *Cry Freedom* gone, and censorship the rule in South Africa, apartheid may become for some "out of sight, out of mind." Helpful in counteracting this is an excellent documentary, *The Cry of Reason*, from the South Africa Media Center in San Francisco (415-621-6196), a film designed for distribution to television or, at very low rates, interested church groups. The subject is Beyers Naude, the Dutch Reformed minister, who, although raised in the white enclaves of apartheid and originally a biblical apologist for it, grew to detest the system and has ended up a leading South African dissident.

Now in his seventies, Naude is a minister in a black church, and much of the documentary footage shows him with his congregation—an image of the interracial harmony he tirelessly promotes. Also on the tape are: his speech last year at Georgetown University on American support of apartheid; interviews with Desmond Tutu, Alan Boesak, and T.S. Farisani of the Evangelical Lutheran Church; and, of course, the horror of the shantytowns and the physical assaults to which South African blacks are condemned. One often thinks given a subject like this that we have seen it all before; then a

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documentary like *The Cry of Reason* comes along and reawakens the mind and conscience. It is a powerful portrayal of real faith in social action. It was produced by Robert Bilheimer, Ronald Mix, and Kevin Harris, who directed it for Worldwide Documentaries.

Stand and Deliver was the spring's high quality sleeper hit—a film at once upbeat and unsentimental, dominated by teenagers but emotionally adult. Starring Edward James Olmos, formerly of "Hill Street Blues," the film concerns the inspirational real-life story of efforts by a Hispanic math teacher to persuade his students to care enough to learn so that they can escape the cycles of poverty and degradation. This is no Rocky Meets Goodbye Mr. Chips: *Stand and Deliver* is well-written, crisply edited, and astutely acted, not just by the lead but also by a supporting cast of young actors (Lou Diamond Phillips, Rosana de Soto, and others) who make this, perhaps, the best school film in decades.

Written by Ramon Menendez and Tom Musca, and directed by the former and produced by the latter, *Stand and Deliver* is a presentation of American Playhouse Theater, and its theatrical quality is evident in the strong, vibrant screenplay. Olmos plays Jaime Escalante, a teacher at Garfield High School in the East Los Angeles barrio. As a result of his math teaching, Escalante has steadily increased his students' test scores over the last decade.

Olmos creates his role through counterpoint: with balding hair and a halting gait, he comes across at times as physically frail. When a friend invites him on his boat, he says, "No, man, I get seasick in the rain." In the middle of the film, he stumbles weakly down a stairway in a convincing "mild" heart attack from stress, or "teacher burn-in" as one young Ms. (or *Señorita*) Malaprop accidentally but aptly calls it.

The stress comes from his fierce energy in class, mostly involving the wit he uses to overcome students' resistance to learning. Having left a high-paying corporate job, he is a first-year teacher—explaining perhaps his initial reserves of humor to conquer all. Some of his students can hardly understand English. Others think learning is sissy (Olmos: "Tough guys do fried chicken for a living"); a few want to make ready money at odd jobs rather than graduate (Olmos: "Wouldn't you rather be designing cars than repairing them?"). Many of the girls are just interested in their own sexual power ("Is it true intelligent people make better lovers?" Olmos teases, then gets them solving algebra equations with "x" and "y" number of gigolos). Olmos combines deep passion for education with a hip knowledge of pop culture. Would that more teachers had such gifts! And credit writer/director Ramon Menendez with a great heart and ear in catching them.

As with *La Bamba* and *The Milagro Beanfield War*, *Stand and Deliver* is a strong Hispanic film, reflecting the increased marketing and political power of that community. But the story in the film is ten years old, when things were less advanced. "You have two strikes against you," Olmos tells his charges, "your name and your complexion. But math is the great equalizer." Alas, not entirely true. The film's crisis involves Advance Placement Tests in calculus, in which Olmos's students do so well that the Educational Testing Service charges cheating.

The film's upbeat tone doesn't spoil our sense of their pain, even betrayal, over the charges. As Olmos puts it: "They've lost their confidence in the system they're finally qualified to enter." Olmos had tried to inspire his students with racial pride, pointing to the mathematical genius of the Mayas and telling them it was "in their blood." He is all the more incensed, therefore, at the implicit racism of officials at ets, pointing out that they wouldn't be so convinced of cheating if the same scores came from Beverly Hills. Since ETS is a force of very dubious value in American education, it's a joy to watch it take some lumps in the film's concluding segments.

The film represents a major improvement for the image of teachers in movies, corresponding to the greater concern for their professional status, morale, and pay. Here is a strong, real, and positive image of a teacher as a guide, helper, and figure of forceful inspiration. It is a welcome relief from the caricature stereotypes of teachers in many comedies—from teenpix such as *Breakfast Club*, *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, *Porky's*, *High School*, *Summer School*, and *Teachers* to "adult" films such as the autobiographies of Woody Allen, which always manage to include a destructive image of a teacher in every portrait of his persecuted youth.

Stand and Deliver also addresses head-on two core issues in

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the current education debate: how to combine excellence and equality of opportunity. As Olmos's passionate pursuit of excellence from the barrio makes clear, these are not choices, but equally valuable goals. Any teacher or school system is deficient which ignores the import of either, and fails to tolerate the unstable but productive balance required in pursuing them.

Nevertheless, *Stand and Deliver* may feed certain illusions about educational improvement. It is true, better test scores are indicative of improvement in some skill areas; in a neutral area like math, it would seem pushing for improved scores would have no cultural bias, or, as Olmos implies, might even play to a Chicano strength. Still, regardless of the racial or cultural bias issue stressed by some ethnic groups, improved scores in any area are part of what Albert Shanker and other educators of diverse backgrounds decry as "test mania." Improved scores may help students get into a better college; but a high school curriculum built around the exclusive pursuit of higher test scores has led too many teachers to complain they are no longer teaching content, but test-taking, or "preparing for the test." In particular, teachers complain that test-prepping is building a nation of short-answer experts, quick on cognition and intellection, but not in independent and critical thinking, problem solving, ethical judgment, or creativity.

Stand and Deliver concerns Advanced Placement Tests, which fortunately include long-answer formats, not just multiple choice. With its heroic but realistic treatment of a teacher, the film also stands as an important cultural hallmark of a nation at risk (but will 1989 bring us, as so many candidates promise, "an education president"?). Still, *Stand and Deliver* may be taken by some as further proof of the need for nonstop testing and test-prepping. In self-interestedly and profitably encouraging this illusion, ETS may have far more to answer for than its possible ethnic bias. I like *Stand and Deliver*, but it might be nailing ETS on a minor count.

TOM O'BRIEN

STAGE

ALMOST COMMITTED
'THE ROAD TO MECCA'

When Athol Fugard's *The Road to Mecca* was first produced at Yale in 1984, it was both stiff (particularly in Tom Aldredge's performances as Marius) and oddly amorphous. Carmen Mathews, as Helen, did that marvelously affecting throat-catch of hers in all the right places, but the character never really took shape. Fugard was directing his own play, but his presence in a production as performer or director is never a guarantee that the play will work as well as it should, as the eviscerated version of *The Blood Knot* illustrated in the 1985 revival of that excellent play. Now *The Road to Mecca* has finally come to New York. Fugard is not only directing but playing Marius, and Yvonne Bryceland, making her American debut, is Helen, a role that was written for her. Bryceland and Fugard have been working together for more than twenty-five years, since their days at The Space in Cape Town, and anyone who was lucky enough to see the film version of *Boesman and Lena* (1973), which was occasionally visible but never properly distributed in this country, knows how well they work together. In this production of *Mecca*, they are joined by Amy Irving, giving a characteristically strong performance as Elsa, Helen's young friend and would-be protector.

The Road to Mecca takes place in the Karoo, a semi-arid area in central South Africa, in an Afrikaner village, probably rather like the one in which Fugard's mother was raised. Ostensibly, at least, the play is a struggle between Marius, the local clergyman, and Elsa, who is English and urban, for the body and perhaps the soul (spirit, at least) of Helen. The latter is a widow, shunned as an eccentric by the people she grew up with. After the death of her husband, Helen began to construct strange statues, which designer John Lee Beatty happily leaves to our imagination—camels and wisemen, owls and mermaids—which fill her yard, facing toward Mecca, a place that exists only in Helen's mind, not to be confused with the holy city in Saudi Arabia. She has also covered the walls of her house with bits of broken glass, which sparkle like jewels when the candles play on them at night. Marius, who distrusts and fears Helen's creations, wants to rescue her from her home (she has been burned in a fire started by her candles) and put her into an old folks home. Elsa, who has driven a long, grueling distance in response to what she hears in Helen's letter as a cry for help, tries to save her or to persuade her to save herself by not signing the papers. For Elsa, who teaches in a "colored" school where she tries to subvert the system by teaching her pupils to think, Helen's statues are a revolutionary statement aimed at her closed Afrikaner world; for Marius, they are a kind of obsession which he tries to belittle by calling them her "hobby."

Although commentators on the play (see Mel Gussow in the *New York Times*, April 24) tend to see Fugard as siding with Elsa, the real conflict in the play, as the second act makes clear, is between Helen and two people who love her. When she finally finds her voice and describes what the sparkling lights on her walls and the giant figures in her yard mean to her—visions made real, light fighting against the spiritual darkness in which she has lived—both Marius and Elsa retreat. Marius, who says he has never seen such happiness in her, accepts that he has lost Helen to her creations, and Elsa, who has read her own aggressiveness into Helen's statues, succumbs to Helen's strength and joy, takes comfort for the emptiness and loss in her own life. Helen, who almost signed the commitment papers because she was afraid that she would never work at her art again, knows now that she must hang on where she is, hoping to be reanimated by a new image demanding form but knowing that she will never reach the Mecca

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of her mind. Fugard, as a playwright, knows that no artist reaches his Mecca; like Helen, the best he can do is to stay on the road in that direction.

Despite the fascinating concept at the heart of *The Road to Mecca* and a wonderfully electric second act, the play has difficulties which suggest that it has not reached its Mecca. Most of the first act consists of talk between Helen and Elsa, often revisiting common ground, and the going is slow, even when two excellent performers try to mask exposition as comradeship. Fugard often has his characters telling each other what they already know, but in a play like *Master Harold . . . and the Boys*, for instance, the process is dramatically effective because it establishes a ritual of recollection which the action of the play will destroy. In *Mecca*, the women too often seem to be simply telling the audience what it needs to know. Add that Yvonne Bryceland scurries around like Miss Mousie through much of the first act and crumples before a dominating Marius at the beginning of the second. She does both things very well. But the character would be intolerable if it were not for the moments in which Bryceland abruptly drops the register of her voice, hinting at the steel in Helen, promising the burst of strength that will eventually come and carry the play to its vibrant finish.

While *The Road to Mecca* was being readied for New York, an excellent production of Fugard's *Statements about an Arrest under the Immorality Act* was playing at the Wilma Theater in Philadelphia with Michael Rogers and Kate Skinner (in the role created by Yvonne Bryceland in Cape Town and London) as the interracial couple. *Statements* is a fine evocation of two people drawn to one another despite the legal restrictions designed to keep them apart and of the way in which their love, need, uncertainty, guilt, and fear play through their speeches. There was some talk of the production's being moved to New York, but Fugard's preoccupation with *Mecca* apparently forestalled that. Too bad, for the Wilma *Statements* deserved a wider audience, and it would have been rewarding to have two helpings of Fugard for hungry New York audiences.

GERALD WEALES

WHAT DOES GOD HAVE TO DO WITH IT?

The meaning of AIDS

DENNIS M. DOYLE

The title of the U.S. Catholic bishops' document, "The Many Faces of AIDS," highlights what a multifaceted disease we are up against. AIDS is an illness, an epidemic, a killer, a threat, a news event, a mystery. In its commingling of sex, death, and drugs, AIDS strikes fear and fascination into our hearts. Our reactions to AIDS are complex and often anything but level-headed. The social phenomenon of AIDS breaks down our minds' defense systems and gives free rein to the deep-seated fears of even the most well-adjusted among us. AIDS is the great American Rorschach test, a dark blot whose interpretations may say more about the interpreter than about the picture being interpreted.

A recent Times Mirror Gallup Poll revealed that 42.5 percent of those surveyed think that AIDS might be a punishment from God for immoral sexual behavior (*Newsweek*, February 1, 1988). Presumably, about 57.5 percent find that pretty hard to believe. How could anyone see the hand of God in the pain of human beings? What about the people who acquired AIDS from blood transfusions or while in the womb? Is the fact that lesbians are currently the lowest risk group for AIDS a sign of God's favor?

And yet for the 42.5 percent who said yes, the connection may seem obvious. Since the question asked whether AIDS *might* be a punishment from God, isn't it outrageously presumptuous to suggest that God has nothing to do with AIDS? Didn't God send the angel of death to kill the firstborn of the Egyptians when the pharaoh refused to let God's people go? Didn't C.S. Lewis explain how pain can come as a gift from God to move us from sin to grace? Is it simply a coincidence that the two highest risk groups, nonmonogamous homosexuals and intravenous drug abusers, are engaged in activities that traditionally carry the admonishment of religious authorities?

It is clear that the social phenomenon of AIDS raises not just ethical questions but fundamental theological questions. Even the poll results are as interesting for what they suggest about people's attitudes toward God as for what they suggest about people's attitudes toward AIDS.

A reading of some of the popular literature on the ultimate meaning of AIDS reveals a complex picture. There are as many positions about how God acts in the world and, consequently, what AIDS means, as there are commentators. Each commentator is operating with basic theological presuppositions, whether explicit or implicit. An examination of several approaches to the question of how God acts in the world will serve as a vehicle for introducing some current literature about the meaning of AIDS.

The following models are intended to provide a general backdrop against which to understand the presuppositions

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of various interpretations of AIDS in its relationship to God. They are not intended to be either inclusive of all possible positions or free of overlap. The terms "interventionist" and "intentional" are taken from John Shea's *Stories of God* (Thomas More Press, 1978), though what Shea means by them differs somewhat from my usage here.

Beliefs about AIDS and Divine Activity:

● *Interventionist*. Stresses divine omnipotence, with an emphasis on God's occasional breaking into the natural order of things to accomplish special purposes.

This approach underlies the position of Charles Stanley, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention. Stanley is quoted in the *Los Angeles Times* (January 24, 1986) saying, "AIDS is God indicating his displeasure toward a sinful lifestyle."

Why would Stanley say this?

Imagine that you believe the Bible is inspired by God in a way that it is factually inerrant. You read the stories of God wiping out the world of Noah, putting plagues upon the Egyptians, sending the Israelites into captivity, striking dead Ananias and Sapphira, and on and on. You know well that God's wrath can be made manifest in this life and that justice is thereby done. You know also that in your fundamentalist reading of the Bible homosexual behavior is consistently and clearly condemned.

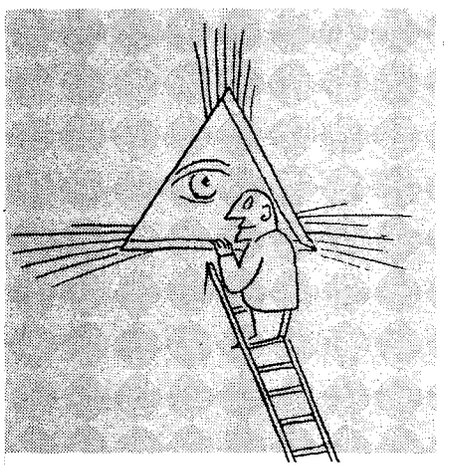
From this perspective it would be silly not to suspect strongly that God is directly behind AIDS. The argument that some victims are clearly "innocent" is unconvincing, for the Scriptures put no constraints upon God to have everything work out justly in this life. That the punishment of one group spills over onto others does not mean that God cannot be the cause.

● *Natural Consequences*. Believes that God is the primary cause of all, but there exist secondary chains of causality. Divine justice is structured into the universe such that ultimately one pays the price of one's transgressions.

This approach can be found in the position of Gene Antonio in *The AIDS Cover-Up? The Real and Alarming Facts about AIDS* (Ignatius Press, 1986). Antonio draws a connection between the onset of AIDS and the widespread violations of biblical injunctions against homosexuality and bestiality. He chastises the "self-appointed prophets of nihilism and pansexual libertinism who have succeeded in fostering the conditions leading to the biological and social downfall of society. . . . With AIDS, the horrendous physiological consequences of their deathstyle can no longer be concealed." Antonio laments that "the Pied Pipers of the homosexual liberation movement have led hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of young bathhouse habitués to an impending AIDS death."

Similar presuppositions are reflected in the position taken by the Vatican representative to the United Nations, Archbishop Justo Mullor, in a speech given to the World Health Organization in May, 1987 when he said that AIDS, although not directly caused by God, is the result of disturbances in human ecology due to a "suicidal permissiveness geared to anarchistic pleasures." This manifests one way of understanding: what you sow you reap. The universe is structured in such a way that sooner or later you will pay; official Catholic teaching is clear about the immorality of homosexual activity and drug abuse.

As with the interventionist position, it is not logically necessary that there be a one-to-one correspondence between those who are "guilty" and those who are punished. It is only necessary that there be a fairly high correlation. God is not directly zapping people. Secondary causes are at work in such a way as to achieve the ultimate ends of divine providence.



A New Age interpretation of AIDS, which is something of the flip side of Antonio and Mullor's positions, is claimed to have been "channeled" by Kevin Ryerson from John of Zebedee, who lived 2,000 years ago and was a follower of Christ (see *Psychoimmunity and the Healing Process*, Celestial Arts, 1986). To "channel" is to serve as a medium for a being from another spiritual plane or from another time. "John," the being who is channeled, envisions AIDS as a mirror reflection of the way that society has treated the high risk groups, homosexuals and drug abusers. In a separate channeling, a direct link is made between the collapse of the immune system and social disinvestment.

Like the positions of Antonio and Mullor, this New Age view presupposes a natural order that responds to moral outrages without the need for a special divine intervention. It is distinct from Mullor's position in that it locates the morally outrageous in society's *treatment* of high-risk groups rather than in *behaviors* of the high-risk groups themselves.

● *Discernment*. Believes that God is at work in the world in mysterious ways, without relying on a model of direct intervention. God somehow influences not only the consciousness of human beings, but also guides major historical events and shapes significant moments in the lives of individuals. Although the ways of God are difficult to discern, the ways in which things happen are surely more than coincidence.

Such an approach underlies the position taken by the gay activist writer John Fortunato in his book, *AIDS: The Spiritual Dilemma* (Harper and Row, 1987). Fortunato rejects the idea that AIDS is a divine punishment. He believes that we cannot know the ultimate reason for AIDS. And yet he still feels compelled to wrestle with the question of the meaning of AIDS in the divine scheme of things. Fortunato writes: "I do not know why God—whose ways I wish I could just give up trying to understand—initially chose gay men to comprise most of AIDS' victims." Fortunato is of the school of thought that there is a reason for

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everything. Ultimately God is writing straight with crooked lines.

Fortunato speculates about redeeming elements that might be uncovered in the AIDS epidemic. Although Fortunato emphasizes that it is all a great mystery, he offers what he labels the "non-rational" suggestion that AIDS will put sufferers in touch with a true spirituality of death, resurrection, hope, and compassion, and that perhaps it will be through AIDS that society's attitude toward gays, drug abusers, and other marginalized groups might be converted.

What is fascinating about Fortunato's position is that he combines a gay activist view with the notion that AIDS has meaning in the divine plan.

John Paul II, although his specific discernment differs from Fortunato's, seems to take a similar approach to the question of God's activity in the world. Last fall, on the night he arrived in Miami for his second U.S. tour, the pope was asked whether AIDS is a punishment from God. He replied, amid many T.V. cameras, that "the ways of God are very difficult to determine." He said further that "homosexuals are in the heart of the church." During his trip, he both reached out compassionately to persons with AIDS and reasserted the church's official stand against homosexual activity. The pope's approach is neither to deny nor to overinterpret the activity of God, but to model an appropriate response in the face of an epidemic that challenges our powers of discernment.

● *Intentional*. Believes that God works through our inner life. God is experienced as a tug on our subconscious toward truth, goodness, beauty, and love. God is involved in human affairs insofar as human beings respond to this inner call and give themselves over to it.

That Eileen Flynn takes such a position is reflected in the title of her book, *AIDS: A Catholic Call to Compassion* (Sheed and Ward, 1985). Flynn discerns in AIDS a call for human beings to exercise Christian love of neighbor. She emphasizes universal human dignity, the special claims of the needy and the suffering, the imperative not to judge, the taking up of one's cross, being steadfast in hope, and many other central Christian themes. Flynn is critical of official Catholic teaching about homosexual activity, and suggests that monogamous relationships be encouraged.

Flynn discusses in depth the place of God in the phenomenon of AIDS without ever bringing up the question of whether God causes AIDS. The immanence of God is God within the human heart; the transcendence of God is the divine call to growth in love. Flynn presents a God who acts not through any kind of direct intervention but rather as a forceful tug on human intentionality.

The U.S. Catholic bishops in "The Many Faces of AIDS" (*Origins* December 24, 1987) take a position on the question of divine activity that sounds very much like Flynn's. They say, "Jesus has revealed to us that God is compassionate, not vengeful"; and stress that "as with all other diseases, AIDS is a human illness." The bishops outline a compassionate response that respects official Catholic teaching on the meaning of human sexuality, and implicitly criticizes any position which discerns in AIDS a direct punishment from God. They call for Catholics to respond as Jesus would. They focus on revelation as the disclosure of the possibility of new life and the deeper meaning of divine love.

The position of the bishops is echoed in a pamphlet put out by the Catholic Health Association of the United States, "AIDS: Ethical Guidelines for Health-care Providers" by Diana Bader and Elizabeth McMillan, 1987. These guidelines insist on the importance of correcting the belief that AIDS is a punishment from God: "Such an attitude, personally demeaning to the person with AIDS, has the further disastrous effect of isolating from the community the sick person most in need of its practical support. The Catholic voice needs to make these ethical points even more forcefully because some persons both inside and outside the church think that Catholic moral doctrine sanctions the punishment idea."

● *Process*. Believes that God's power is persuasive, not controlling. God created a universe with many risky possibilities. What God most offers human beings are choices. God does not foreknow the future, but rather struggles and suffers,

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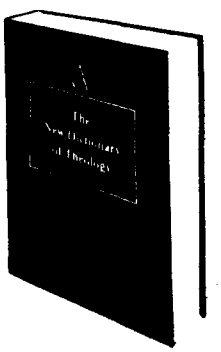

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triumphs and rejoices along with us.

This approach informs the position of Earl E. Shelp and Ronald H. Sunderland in their book, *AIDS and the Church* (Westminster Press, 1987). These scholars interpret AIDS as one unfortunate actualization of the many possibilities of this free and diverse universe that God has created. They argue that "God does not 'send' AIDS for some retributive purpose (such a thought flies in the face of the New Testament witness to a loving God). Rather, God 'risked' creating a world in which HIV could develop."

Shelp and Sunderland are therefore not as concerned about the cause of AIDS as they are about the human response to AIDS. God offers humankind the choice between accepting and rejecting the role of caregiver i.e., risking possible sufferinto to lovingly respond to the afflicted.

● *Secular.* Believes that the causes of this-worldly happenings can be explained adequately without any reference to God. Secularists characterize the "religious" view as holding that AIDS is a divine punishment, and sharply criticize that view. Loretta Koppelman, writing in a collection of essays, *AIDS: Ethics and Public Policy* (ed. by Christine Pierce and Donald VanDeVeer, Wadsworth, 1988), uncovers the contradictions inherent in the "punishment concept of disease," both religious and secular, when applied to AIDS. Her overall thrust, however, dismisses the value of any discussion whatsoever about the morality of behaviors involved in the transmission of AIDS. Her conclusion suggests that any wrestling with an ultimate meaning for AIDS is senseless and self-serving.

Writing in the same volume, Judith Wilson Ross offers an incisive analysis of various metaphors used to talk about AIDS. Drawing upon the thought of Susan Sontag, Ross concludes, "AIDS has been permitted and encouraged to carry a moral meaning, but the morality is in our minds, not in the disease." In yet another essay in the same volume, Allan M. Brandt writes, "In some quarters the misapprehension persists: AIDS is caused by homosexuality rather than a retrovirus. In this confused logic, the answer to the problem is simple: Repress these behaviors. Implicit in this approach to the problem are powerful notions of culpability and guilt."

Common to these interpretations is the insistence that AIDS is caused by a virus, period. Any attempt to import a dramatic meaning from outside the strict medical model will result in a destructive distortion of reality.

The debate about the meaning of AIDS is inextricably mixed with the debate about the meaning of God. Positions taken on AIDS education, prevention, and research are grounded in presuppositions about the way in which God is at work—or not—in the world.

Thus, to challenge any of the positions I have outlined is to challenge not just an opinion about a disease but deeply held sets of presuppositions and beliefs. It is futile to argue against an interventionist that divine justice is not at work on the grounds that not every case fits a neat pattern. Nor is it effective to argue against an avowed secularist that the combination of factors involved is too uncanny to be mere coincidence.

Nor is this by any means a debate confined to interventionists and secularists. Most Catholics, for example, would find the secular view foreign to their consciousness. Yet a broad pluralism exists even among Catholics who may think in terms of the interventionist, discernment, intentional, or process model, or more likely some combination thereof.

The trouble with this variety of competing beliefs is that issues that should be central to society's response to the AIDS epidemic—such as care-giving, prevention, and societal values—are becoming exclusively associated with certain sets of presuppositions, hampering the debate about what is a proper public response. For example, those who see AIDS as the hand of God warning about social permissiveness seem inclined to permit "the sinners to suffer" the consequences of their misdeeds. In other circles, it is difficult to discuss the behaviors by which the disease has most often been transmitted in the U.S.; any mention of "morality" is taken, of itself, to be judgmental and reactionary. Among those who see in AIDS an opportunity to exercise Christian charity and healing, any general questioning of social permissiveness is viewed as inappropriate and irrelevant to the task at hand.

Can society distinguish between giving heartfelt material and spiritual help to the suffering and condoning, without hesitation, any lifestyle whatsoever? Can society distinguish between blaming AIDS victims for the outbreak and spread of the disease on the one hand, and discussing the morality and risk associated with those behaviors? The bishops' perspective in "The Many Faces of AIDS" is a striking example that we can. Although the bishops' moral objection to any homosexual activity is hotly contested within society at large, the bishops still manage to stress a loving response to persons with AIDS while upholding the church's guidelines for moral sexual behavior. □

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The world of Clonbrony Wood

THE TENANTS OF TIME
Thomas Flanagan
E. P. Dutton, $21.95, 824 pp.

J. V. Long

Thomas Flanagan's reputation as an important historical novelist was established with the publication, ten years ago, of *The Year of the French*. His second novel, *The Tenants of Time*, is the story, as remembered and recounted to an ambitious young historian several years after the facts, of a group of friends and acquaintances who had lived through the social and political uncertainties of late nineteenth-century Ireland. Mr. Flanagan's novel is enormously long and unfalteringly rich in its delineation of the sometimes thorny connections between the public associations and private needs and loyalties of people who live energetically, and even recklessly, through times of political turbulence. With this new book the author's reputation is unassailable.

The historian-chronicler, Patrick Prentiss, is the son of a prominent Dublin barrister and an Oxford graduate on the first rungs of an academic career. He chooses as the focus of his professional research the unsuccessful Fenian uprising of 1868, and more particularly a single skirmish between the rebels and the British at a place called Clonbrony Wood near Kilpeder, a provincial market town in southwestern Ireland. Prentiss becomes a recorder of what we have learned to call oral history. And his engagement with his subject, and subjects, as he becomes incorporated into their stories affects his own sensibility as he is shaped (as any thoughtful, young Irishman in the early years of this century might have been) by the history he intended merely to tell. The historian, however, is an unobtrusive presence in the novel, and is skillful enough in Mr. Flanagan's hands not to intrude upon the varieties of tone and subtleties of voice that the real storytellers—the people who participated in the historical events here fictionalized—are able to display throughout the book.

Prentiss's most reliable and engaging witness to the '68 uprising, as well as to subsequent political dilemmas—the Land of the 1880s and Parnell's rise and fall—which sustained tensions between Great Britain and Ireland during the last quarter of the last century, is the Kilpeder schoolmaster, Hugh McMahon. His voice is modulated by affection for his friends, understanding for their choices, and sympathy for their suffering. Furthermore, his memory is informed by the confidence that seems concomitant with his honesty about himself. "But I was to drift into history, and then drift out of it again, a man shaped for obscurity as others are shaped for great enterprises." McMahon's life remains moored, happily, to his domestic and professional responsibilities. After his youthful foray into rebellion at Clonbrony Wood and the relatively brief jail term which resulted from it, he is content to settle, half-hidden but not complacent, into the ordinariness of provincial life. Some of his collaborators were destined to remain more visible, and McMahon supplies the lineaments of their stories.

The world, however, is broader than McMahon's imagination, as he would admit, and many of Mr. Flanagan's characters speak for themselves, supplying different perspectives on McMahon's point of view; providing information that he'd withheld, or not known; creating their own histories. They move beyond the schoolmaster's purview into the world of the local gentry, to Dublin and London, and on to the Continent, yet remain inextricably linked to a handful of people in an obscure market town that once, however ineffectively, nourished sedition.

McMahon's closest friend, Robert Delaney, shrewd and able, establishes himself as a political force for a time through his involvement with the Land League (a successful effort to organize tenants against landlords) and by his loyalty to Parnell. Vincent Tully, scion of the town's newly prosperous merchant, is disposed more to pleasure than to duty but is blessed with charm and abundant good will. And Edward Nolan, back from military service with the Union Army in America, bearing the Fenian Organization's orders for the early stages of the rebellion, suffering for years in a British prison on account of his part in it, emerges from that darkness into another, as a professional murderer employed to exact the Organization's vengeance for political treachery.

Even deeper than these characterizations, and others throughout the book, is the palpable sense the author conveys of the country, the land itself as a perduring Force. "The events of the eighties," one character recalls in conversation with Prentiss, "are long distant, of course, but here memories cling to the soil itself, almost, and the very rocks and trees remember. . . . In my own day, the famine was never spoken of among the peasantry, a communal shame, but the land itself remembered." The relationship these lives, as they are lived, describe between themselves and the earth they

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walk on gives the book an almost mystical density.

Against such a background, the politics of the land, the issues of tenancy, of landlords' rights and greed, of homesteaders as expendable and (for political purposes) pliable victims are seen in incredibly sharp relief. There is no shortage of politicians, including Delaney, willing to manipulate the disadvantages of the poor against the British interests. It would appear that the conflicts are about self-determination and ownership: Who owns the land? Who owns Ireland? But the story itself, I think, undermines its history.

McMahon understands that "historians are hostile as though upon instinct towards quietude, silence, seasons, the stars. For them the League, the boycottings, Parnell's coming into command, the land acts, the final explosion into bitterness and division, the melancholy aftermath—such concerns are the stuff of history. . . . It is fellows like myself, perhaps, quiet men who have made no covenants with history, who live most fully within it, and it is the quiet times, the silent decades, that we savor: the growth of children, the entanglements year by year of our outspreading memories, unpruned." Thus, we can own our memories, and precious little else. It is pointless to be alarmed at our impermanence, our tenancy. What is important is not what we own, but rather what we share, whom we love, and what we are able, together, to remember.

Prentiss, the compiler, realizes that "history . . . was a stitching of tattered legends." And Mr. Flanagan's book, through its elaborateness and by means of its concreteness and astonishing writing, offers narrative grounded in the ordinary exchanges of life—friendship, loyalty, disapproval, scandal, reconciliation—as an antidote to legend and as the undergirding of history. History is in the air we breathe, but our feet, to get from one place to another, must stay on the ground.

The Tenants of Time is, simply, a remarkable book; convincing as history (I went looking for pictures of Robert Delaney in books about Parnell and checked more than one map to see if I could locate Kilpeder) and compelling as fiction. Furthermore, and sadly, current events substantiate the accuracy and range of Mr. Flanagan's imagination. During the days following the constant re-broadcast of IRA "mourners" murdering the two British soldiers who foolishly penetrated a funeral procession, I read this description in *The Tenants of Time* of "a kind of primitive, tribal rage which ascribes to the masters of the land an absolute power in the most intimate as well as the most public parts of our lives, and for which none save the most primitive of retributions will suffice. . . ."

Perhaps we might learn from fiction what we seem unable to learn from history. □

AN AMBITIOUS JUNIOR OFFICER

WALDHEIM
Bernard Cohen and Luc Rosenzweig
Translated by Josephine Bacon
Adama Books, $17.95, 183 pp.

WALDHEIM: THE MISSING YEARS
Robert Edwin Herzstein
Arbor House/William Morrow, $18.95, 303 pp.

Gordon C. Zahn

The Cohen-Rosenzweig effort is one of those unfortunate cases where, whatever its authors may have intended, a book self-destructs for reason of style and tone. Seldom has this reviewer encountered a work of such unrelieved and vituperative polemic in what purports to be a factual contribution to an ongoing controversy. The objective is to "demolish" Kurt Waldheim as a completely characterless and incompetent nonentity who somehow managed to mastermind some of the more heinous episodes of World War II war crimes. It is to the authors' credit that they admit he is "no Eichmann," but that is the only positive thing they can say in his behalf.

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Nor is this all. Their indignation spills over to include as virtual co-conspirators Austria itself, "a country whose redemption in the eyes of the world is based on a lie," and Catholicism as a wellspring of anti-Semitic and pan-German nationalist sympathies. While no one can deny elements of truth in all three conclusions, these deserve a more balanced historical interpretation than one finds here. The same is true for the international "cover-up"—with Israel a participant!—which, as Cohen and Rosenzweig see it, has prevented the ugly truth from coming to light until now.

Professor Herzstein's study is altogether different. As the one who first brought the Waldheim "war crimes" charges to public attention, he deals with the later developments from a perspective (not completely achieved) of dispassionate detachment and scholarship. He treats the same documentary evidence and charges, but he manages to present virtually the same case and conclusion in a manner that allows the reader to make his own reasoned judgment. In doing so, he does not ignore the weaknesses of the evidence and possibly self-serving character of the charges Cohen and Rosenzweig seem to regard as beyond rational challenge.

I hold no brief for Waldheim, but the malice in Cohen and Rosenzweig's approach could tempt me to rise to the unfortunate man's defense were it not for my own objections to him and his wartime record. Thus, while I am in agreement with both books that Waldheim, the man, has shown himself to be a consummate opportunist and prevaricator, I am not quite ready to conclude, as both seem to do, that he (and Austria as long as he remains president) deserve to be reduced to pariah status. Our own recent history, unfortunately, provides ample evidence that the combination of manipulative opportunism and a disregard for truth does not automatically disqualify one as a candidate for a nation's highest office.

Kurt Waldheim's military career seems to have been that of an ambitious junior officer toadying to the wishes of his seniors, a pattern of behavior likely to apply to the overwhelming majority of junior officers regardless of what uniform they wear. After the war the same talent for knowing the right paths, making the right contacts, and pulling the right strings led him up the ladder to positions of international as well as national prestige. Whether his election to the post of General Secretary of the United Nations was as much the "accidental compromise" that Cohen and Rosenzweig make it or the somewhat more calculated program Herzstein describes is probably immaterial. His two terms of service in that distinguished post probably were more productive—in preserving at least the semblance of dignity for that contentious body—than Herzstein credits and certainly nothing like the fiasco of incompetence the other two authors maintain.

There can be no justification for Waldheim's clumsy attempts to cover his military past with a heavy fog of denials, distortions, excuses, and reinterpretations. The issue, of course, is precisely *what* is being covered. In my judgment the evidence all three authors

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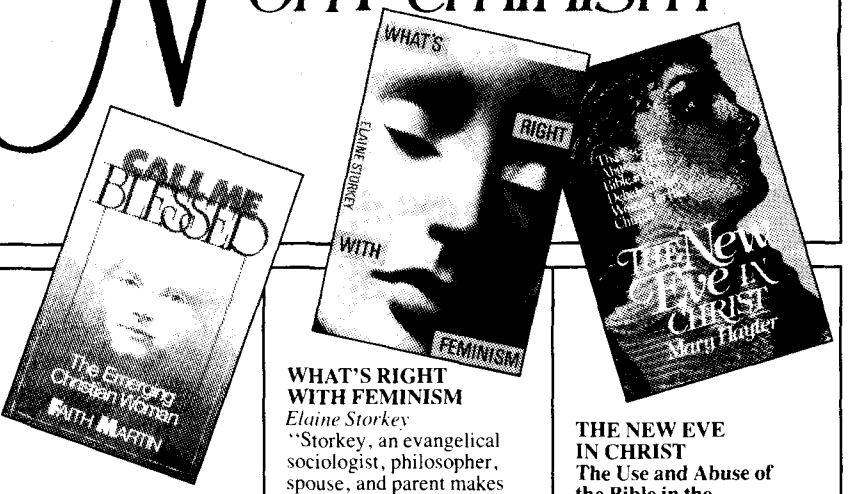

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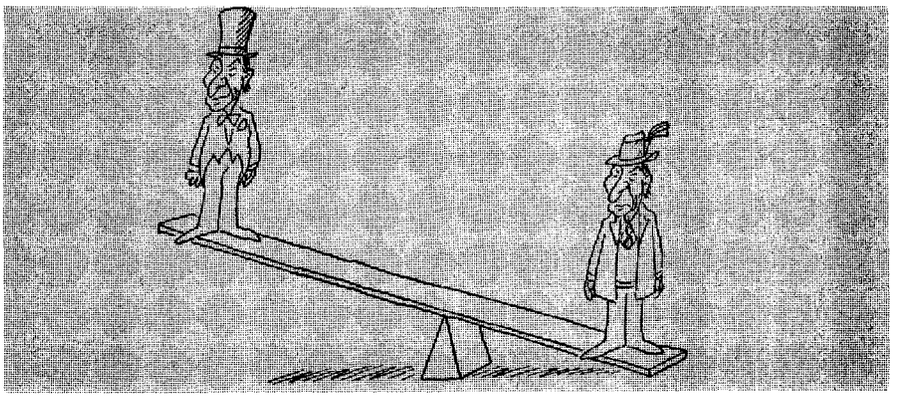

provide to support their stern indictment is not as convincing as they obviously think. Altogether too much of the "Waldheim case" consists of a loose tissue of logical inference. Some rest upon Waldheim's presumed presence on the scene (he was there, *ergo* he must have known); others, on his place in the regimental "flow chart" (it was part of his job description, so he must have done it). Here, too, Herzstein's is by far the better *and fairer* book. He gives due weight to the fact that the eyewitness testimony of the alleged victims is not all that conclusive either, and makes it very clear that the postwar charges brought against him by former Jugoslav partisans must be questioned as the product of the often uncritical passion for vengeance that prevailed at the time—and, even more, by the changing interests of the Tito regime vis-à-vis its Austrian neighbor and its erstwhile patron, the Soviet Union. Indeed, at one point, it is not too much to say, the "re-discovery" of the Waldheim documentation was tied to what could be described as diplomatic blackmail.

This is not to say the charges are false; but until more documented proof can be produced to the satisfaction of some impartial authority, there is no justification for treating the president of Austria as a convicted war criminal. Until this has been done it is grossly insulting to describe, as Cohen and Rosenzweig do, the action of John Paul II in ceremonially receiving President Waldheim of Austria as a "slap in the face" delivered to "Jews all over the world." Herzstein, too, is critical of that diplomatic courtesy, but less denunciatory.

Given the pride we take in our nation's hallowed "presumption of innocence" principle, it might be argued that Attorney General Meese (himself no stranger to the lure of political opportunism or the disregard of truth!) may have acted unjustly in putting Waldheim on the "Watch List" and issuing the order excluding him from this country. There is more than a touch of self-righteous hypocrisy in a law which requires such exclusion on the basis of unproven suspicion when the record is so clear that our nation actively assisted in the escape of truly major war criminals (Klaus Barbie, to mention only one) when World War II came to its end.

In the Christian perspective Kurt Waldheim's crime was wearing the Nazi uniform in the first place. *By simply becoming a member of Hitler's armed forces*, he necessarily assumed a share of the guilt for what those forces did; by seeking and attaining higher rank, that share grew larger. Here too, however, our condemnations should perhaps be tempered by an examination of conscience. The memory of fifty-square-mile blankets of napalm unleashed in Vietnam, of villages systematically "torched," or of other military strategies incorporating commands to "shoot anything that moves"—all of these should give us pause before we cast the first stone at Waldheim or anyone else.

The same might apply to the major Jewish organizations which have put so much effort into developing and promoting the case against Waldheim. Could not the deportations and reprisals he is accused of implementing or even ordering in his "performance of duty" find disturbing parallels in Israeli reprisal bombings of refugee camps harboring the "partisans" of the PLO and the severity of the suppression of the resistance in the Israeli-occupied areas of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip? Even deportations?

What Waldheim still defends as "performance of duty" was participation in an unjust war waged by an immoral regime. Faced with this charge of guilt through simple compliance, he insists he had no choice. *But he did.* Other Austrians—heroes like Franz Jaegerstaetter, Michael Lerpscher, Josef Ruf, and some not yet discovered—refused and paid for that refusal with their lives. Whether he committed the acts of which he is accused or not is really beside the point. Even if he did not, one can safely assume that, like most loyal and ambitious (not to mention opportunistic) junior officers, *he would have done them under orders.* The over-arching moral crime, and it is not his alone, is the failure to recognize and respect the limits to obedience.

Strangely enough, it is Cohen and Rosenzweig who touch upon this "obedience" dimension of the Waldheim case, but they are too intent upon the hunt to give it the attention it merits. To have probed these more general implications would have given them less personal satisfaction, perhaps, but it could have brought them and their readers closer to the deeper, but still unrecognized, evil with which humankind must deal if it is to be spared the even greater horrors and crimes of World War III. □

REVIEWERS

GORDON C. ZAHN *is the national director of The Center on Conscience and War in Boston and the author of several books including* German Catholics and Hitler's Wars.

J. V. LONG *is a free-lance writer living in Oregon.*

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 322)

Catholicism. Notwithstanding, the undiluted brand continues to sell.

DARYL J. GLICK

(Continued on next page)

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The author replies:

What appears to Daryl J. Glick as a "gratuitous slight" at "fellow workers in the Lord's vineyard," is, regrettably, a judgment made after years of rehabilitating students (not all of them successfully) who have been exposed to Opus Dei's notion of the "undiluted message of Christ."

Perhaps my problem is more with their *method* than their message, but I have heard too many young people's stories of coerced confessions, cult-like recruitment and indoctrination [illegible] sexuality and women, a [illegible] merely individualistic [illegible] ethic, and [illegible] disrespect [illegible] to associate Opus Dei [illegible] a healthy [illegible] of the Gospel or the tradition [illegible] today.

I apologize [illegible] should have been more forthright [illegible] disapproval.

REV [illegible] NTER

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